

Shteeble's collection of inspiration

Posted by Shteeble - 26 Sep 2010 14:07

#1

Welcome to my collection of inspiration.

The following is my own personal collection of THINGS. (posts, chizuk emails, tidbits, thoughts etc.)

This collection contains the things I want to remember and review on a regular basis.

Remember, this is a COLLECTION, and I do not take credit for the ideas expressed here. I think that most of what I will post will not be my own ideas.

Posting them here will also allow anyone who likes to to read and possibly benefit from them.

Any comments please feel free to pm.

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Re: Shteeble's collection of inspiration

Posted by Shteeble - 08 Feb 2017 04:47

#74

[gibbor120 wrote on 28 Oct 2011 14:44:](#)

I agree that the quest for perfection is poison. It poisoned me. Wanting to be perfect causes stress which is a BIG trigger. then you use your favorite escape which leads to shame, which leads to the need to escape again. You get my drift.

Don't try to "overcome" it. Learn to "let go" of it. I'm no expert on the subject, but there's lots to learn here. Let go of the perfection thing. you'll be much happier, which by the way is the biggest antidote for all this stuff.

hatzlacha rabah!

Oh, you might want to read or listen to some of Dr Sorotzkins stuff here drsorotzkin.com/ . He has some great stuff on perfectionism.

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Re: Shteeble's collection of inspiration
Posted by Shteeble - 14 Feb 2017 04:41

#75

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Re: Shteeble's collection of inspiration
Posted by Shteeble - 22 Feb 2017 04:34

#76

[lhavenostrength wrote on 21 Feb 2017 20:11:](#)

Day 11: Ever felt like you needed to release the tension that has been building within you? The longer you've been holding out the more urgent it seems?

I used to think this was a build up of sexual tension (energy) and if you weren't going to release

it through "acting out" you had to find another way to "let it out", if you wanted to stay sane.

I now think that's a mistake.

There's a build up of tension all right. It's a neutral tension though. It's created from your worries, your stresses and the bumps you hit in your everyday life.

There's nothing sexual about it.

"Acting out" just happens to be a really easy way to release it (and did I mention affordable? Ok don't shoot me, only joking).

Why does this matter?

Well firstly, I never so it did, so there!

I think it does matter a bit though.

For if you feel stressed, feel like you need a release and you recognize that the uncomfortability that you are experiencing has nothing to do with refraining from acting out, it takes away alot of excuses. It shoots just one more arrow into the "I need to" illusion.

Exercising or singing for the addict (I'm not using this word in the clinical sense, just using it for someone who finds it hard not to engage in PMO) are not like soymilk to a non-lactose person. It's not like animal blood for a vampire.(Vampires prefer human blood, they also don't exist).

Other stress releasers are just as "genuine" as acting out. They require a bit more effort but are more effective as well.

If you managed to read all that, then you are totally awesome.

Have a great day!

[Shteeble wrote on 22 Feb 2017 04:40:](#)

I think you're on to something big here.

I always thought it WAS a buildup of sexual tension...

But you make a strong point.

Can you please continue this train of thought?

Also, I got lost on the Exercising, singing, vampire thing. What was meant in that paragraph?
Thanks.

[lhavenostrength wrote on 22 Feb 2017 05:17:](#)

Sure. I think it's a point which we all know to be true but yet aren't fully cognizant of.

The basic idea is as follows: an alcoholic uses alcohol to deal with the stresses of day to day life. Alcohol is not necessarily the best way (a.k.a most effective method) to release stress. It's

merely the method the alcoholic knows. He LEARNT it.

When he has an overwhelming urge to reach for the bottle it's not to release tension that built up as a result of not drinking.

The truth is that this argument is perhaps even stronger for a sex addict which is a "behavioral" rather than a "substance" addiction.

By the alcoholic it can be argued that it's discomfort resulting from his dependency that he's feeling.

Although in truth I don't think any thinking person believes that dependency is the whole story. Surely, the primary reason the alcoholic drinks is to escape the (sometimes harsh) realities of life.

The exercise and vampire paragraph was just bringing this point home. Vampires prefer human blood. Animal blood is a bad alternative for them. It doesn't really quench their thirst.

I was saying that good habits and good stress releasers for the sex addict are not like the animal blood for the vampire.

They are equally legitimate. Good habits like exercising or building connections with people don't just "quiet the need" to lust.

There is no need to lust.

There IS a need not to feel like garbage or ridiculously and constantly stressed. The only way the sex addict knows to feel good or release stress is through lusting.

He LEARNT it. So now he needs to learn new methods.

I think this may be quite powerful for some. For if you see "acting out" as the natural way to fight stress, no wonder you'll feel triggered when things are going tough.

There doesn't have to be a connection between stress and lust. You just taught yourself that there is one.

Peace

Hope that was somewhat clear.

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Re: Shteeble's collection of inspiration
Posted by Shteeble - 24 Feb 2017 20:44

#77

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Re: Shteeble's collection of inspiration
Posted by Shteeble - 01 Mar 2017 00:45

#78

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Re: Shteeble's collection of inspiration
Posted by Shteeble - 01 Mar 2017 01:00

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Re: Shteeble's collection of inspiration
Posted by Shteeble - 06 Mar 2017 04:53

#80

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Re: Shteeble's collection of inspiration
Posted by Shteeble - 22 Mar 2017 14:22

#81

[lhavenostrength wrote on 21 Mar 2017 18:54:](#)

Day 39: Getting a bit better at not chasing perfection. Not worrying that my practice, learning, exercise or whatever wasn't perfect. Nothing in life is perfect. I'm satisfied that I'm making an effort and trying to be productive.

I don't want to act out ever again. It's so disheartening to read about how people have very long stretches of sobriety and then fall.

Logically, people say it's not so bad, it's like a business doing well, and then having one bad day.

It's just that for me, when I act out it feels like I've lost my entire savings. Perhaps it's just a feeling and it's not reflective of the truth... However, in no other area do I feel like one bad day brings me down so much and messes up past gains.

There's definitely something especially horrible about this behavior.

[Hashem Help Me wrote on 22 Mar 2017 01:35:](#)

Congratulations on where you are up to. Amazing to watch your progress. Great that you are not being hard on yourself about the exercise, learning, etc. Sometimes we take our addictive tendencies and become obsessed with recovery. Super that you have not fallen into this trap.

I hope you realize that it's the yetzer hora that makes one feels "they lost their entire savings".

We need to focus on all those days, all those minutes, that we were omeid b'nisayon and remain proud of that accomplishment come what may.

We have to internalize that we remained clean for a long stretch and we can do it again if necessary.

A psychologist here in Brooklyn told me that m**** makes people feel dirty (besides the physical getting dirty) and that's why we get down so much from it. But we cannot allow "one bad day to bring us down so much and mess up past gains".

You are BH doing great and b'ezras Hashem will continue doing so. You have a strong support team here and Hashem is celebrating with you every minute.

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Re: Shteeble's collection of inspiration
Posted by Shteeble - 30 Jun 2017 17:42

#82

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Re: Shteeble's collection of inspiration
Posted by Shteeble - 06 Mar 2019 13:01

#83

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Shteeble's collection of inspiration

Posted by Shteeble - 23 Apr 2021 12:37

[Aaron613 wrote on 23 Apr 2021 11:12:](#)

what has worked for me is really writing down the reasons and scenarios that cause me to fall and try to eliminate them. Wars require detailed strategy.

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Re: Shteeble's collection of inspiration

Posted by Shteeble - 06 May 2021 14:28

#85

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Re: Shteeble's collection of inspiration

Posted by Shteeble - 11 May 2021 13:07

#86

[Hashem Help Me wrote on 11 May 2021 11:31:](#)

...It sounds like you do not have a kedusha issue. What you do seem to have is a stress issue.

So many of us trained ourselves to use masturbation as a self soothing pacifier. It became our default activity to calm ourselves down.

For years, if anything tense came my way, i would masturbate with a vengeance, or better said, with desperation.

I knew of no other way to self regulate and calm down. I had no other tools. ...

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Re: Shteeble's collection of inspiration
Posted by Shteeble - 31 Jul 2022 22:37

#87

[Vehkam wrote on 31 Jul 2022 20:42:](#)

Tomorrow will mark nine months to the day since I started my journey home. The truth is that I didn't know at the time what path I was headed towards. I just knew that I needed clarity and that I could not attain that clarity while acting out sexually. I knew that I needed a clear mind in order to make the choices on how to spend the rest of my life.

In order to understand where I was coming from it is necessary to back up a little bit. I am 53 years old. I first discovered masturbation when I was 16. During those early years the craving and intensity of those feelings were extremely powerful. I knew that it was wrong but did not really understand why. It was wrong just as much as lots of other things were wrong. I had always been a good kid and done the right thing, but this was definitely something I could not resist. I remember seeing my face in the mirror back then while I was experiencing this pleasure. I was used to seeing an innocent boy looking back at me. Not anymore. Now I saw a face with eyes that reflected a darkness about them. I was no longer innocent. There was a deep-rooted evil within me. The problem was that I liked and craved that evil. It was liberating. It brought me pleasure that was other worldly. The fantasies that I would create in my head were captivating and intense. Many of them were dark in nature and centered around extreme and unhealthy thoughts.

I never told anyone about this. I had no idea if anyone else had these same thoughts. I assumed that no one in my circles would understand what I was dealing with. As a sincere bochur I really wanted to shteig in learning. I felt very torn. I was inwardly very depressed. Sometimes I had to go out once or twice during seder to relieve myself of the pounding intensity that was going on in my body. I needed to do that just to be able to focus on the gemara. So I came back to my shtender feeling like a lowlife, no longer dealing with intense cravings, but carrying a brickload of guilt for where I was holding.

My cravings drove me to do some crazy things. Sneaking xrated magazines into the bathroom at times. (and then having to figure out how in the world to dispose of them.) When I turned 18 I had access to a car. With that came access to all sorts of “adult” places. The magazines were now replaced with movies. I don’t remember the complete timeline but I do know that when I was 21 I learned about all the different things available in nyc at that time. There was a lot available.

I carried my heavily guarded secret with me into marriage. I don’t like to look back and say “what if”, but it is clear to me now that my thinking and decision making was very negatively impacted by my secret. I could never be honest and open up completely. I did not seek out proper guidance. accordingly I entered into a marriage that was doomed to failure from day one. I was not discovered. I didn’t fall apart. But I married someone who was not healthy and there was no relationship. (had she been healthy it may have ended even worse for me...)

I was now stuck with my secret, my guilt, my loneliness and divorce on top of it all. Even though I had a good reputation and was still considered a good learner, there were not many good opportunities for someone in my position. The shidduch crisis had not yet hit and a young divorced guy was not high on any solid girls list.

On the other hand, my secret life did not care if I was divorced or not. I started working and had access to some money. My phone bills grew every month from paid phone services. I knew where and when to go and act out on my fantasies and I became very comfortable spending time in very disreputable places. This was all BEFORE high speed internet.

I did not fix myself at all during this period. I am sure that there were times that I davened for the strength to stop what I was doing, but I did not have any tools or anyone that I was comfortable talking to. On the outside I was fervently frum ehrlich and idealistic. On the inside I had a problem.

A couple of years went by and I was introduced to a frum girl who took interest in me. She saw the frum ehrlich and idealistic side of me and that is what she wanted. She seemed nice enough and I married her despite the fact that there were many red flags. Even before we were married I knew that I would have to carry more than just my side in the marriage. However I was so lonely and she was so interested in me that I decided that I would make it work no matter what.

So for over twenty years and four kids I made it work. As my wife became less and less functional, I took over more and more responsibility. My children grew up without a mother and I was a husband without a wife, but we were a family. I devoted myself to ensuring that my children grew up as happy and healthy as possible even though they never had a mother to nurture them. We took the best trips and vacations and everyone was jealous of us. (I tried to take care of my wife as well but that never worked out. Obviously my secrets were a big factor but ultimately the problems were just too big...) I also learned how to work around my responsibilities and find time to feed my fantasies. I was doing well enough to be able to afford what it cost and I also developed friends from my secret world. To them I could talk about

anything. I had no secrets from them. The only thing they never knew was my real name.

Over the last few years things started to spiral. My children were all growing up and I no longer needed to devote as much attention to them. My wife was also becoming harder and harder to be around. I would take “business trips” for days at a time to get away and also to connect to my other world. It became harder and harder to know which was the real world and which was the fantasy. By this time I also had deep emotional attachment to some friends from the forbidden world.

This is the background and the general picture of my steady decline from yeshiva bochur to sexual addict. The following is the timeline of how hashem pulled me out..... I wrote this early this year...

1)Over the years I tried here and there to stop but never with outside help. I came to a point where I did not really think it was possible to stop at all and just decided to embrace that life and make peace with it.

2) my marriage at home was fairly miserable. I was married to someone who became less and less functional over the years. I had to be the mother and father to my children. My own acting out was a stress relief and keeping me sane on the one hand but it was drawing me further and further down a rabbit hole. (to be clear the marriage did not cause the problem the problem preceded the marriage)

3)Over the years countless people (from the other world) had asked me how I reconcile my religious lifestyle with the forbidden stuff that I was into and I answered them honestly that I could not reconcile it, I just preferred not to have to think about it.

4) A couple of years ago I realized that I was becoming more and more miserable at home (the dysfunction was significantly worse) and I knew that I needed to get out of this marriage. At the time I even contemplated leaving the religious life and following my friends into a fully promiscuous lifestyle. In hindsight this was never really an option. If nothing else I could never have done that to my kids.

5) at the same time I went to the siyum hashas and the religious side of me was inspired to begin Daf Yomi in earnest. That actually gave me the first stability that I needed to turn my life around. It had been decades since i had any serious learning commitment.

6) when Covid hit I ended up becoming even more involved in the Daf and spend even more time on it. I was lucky enough to be in a chabura that met on zoom with a captivating magid shiur. we were often on zoom for over two hours.

7) I was still fully involved in the forbidden life and so the hypocrisy became even more glaring to me.

8) I spent a few days Vacationing With some friends - it was an extremely promiscuous environment. Even so, these were people that I was able to open up about everything and they were fully aware of all my struggles. They also really cared (and still do care – edit – I no longer have contact with any of them) about me. I spent a half a day walking around deep in conversation with one of my friends about my future and goals. After speaking to her I felt like my mind was clearly made up that I cannot move forward in life unless I get divorced.

9) Although I did not share my secret life with my Rav, he felt that he had enough information to encourage me to move on with my life as well and he validated my decision as did my family and friends. (my children were very relieved that I took this step)

10)I was finally able to end my marriage A little over a year ago (in December 2021). While it was a difficult thing to do the after affects were an incredible peacefulness that I have not had in 25 years.

11)I knew that I wanted to go for therapy but was not ready I needed to decompress after the marriage and I just continued doing -what I was doing until then - on both of the religious side and the forbidden side.

12)As soon as I got divorced people started to approach me with dating opportunities. On the outside I told everyone that I was not ready but on the inside I knew that there was a side of me that was secret and that there was no way I would ever marry someone again that didn't know all of me.

13)I also realized that being over 50 if I don't do something about this now I am going to run out of time.

14)right after sukkos this past year I went on vacation again. This time my friends were not able to be there. Most of the time I spent hanging out I realized that I just did not belong here. I believe that this feeling was a gift from Hashem and it was as a result of me keeping up with the Daf even while living in proverbial Sodom and Gomorrah.

15) when I came home I decided that I had decompressed enough and that I am going to try really hard to finally change. I fully expected to fall flat on my face.

16) I did not delete any of my accounts or contacts. I just stopped going onto any sites. I was very busy at work and at home preparing for a child's wedding so it was a good time to stop. I was afraid to announce my war to the yetzer hara so I tried to just do it under the radar without putting on any filters etc. (to clarify, if felt from experience that i could inspire myself to delete everything but that could cause me to have very strong desires to get them back, see 22 below)

17) it was at that point that I joined GYE. I started getting the daily boosts and was religious about listening to them first thing in the morning when I woke up.

18) I posted my first posts and if you read them you will see that I did not think it was possible for me to become clean.

19)I started looking for a therapist and started posting to try to be connected. I spoke to Yaakov

from GYE and I spoke to someone from relief. For the first time in my life I was verbalizing and acknowledging to other people The extent of my problem.

20) I joined the 90 day challenge. Initially, I just planned on working on porn and websites (and worse) and figured that I would work on mzl later on. But then there was a post that being mzl was a fall (even though it probably wasn't because I wasn't working on that) So I decided to be careful with Mzl as well And I started the 90 days from The last time I knew I had been mzl. At this point I became fully emotionally invested in this fight.

21) I cannot explain it but since I started this process I have not had a fall. Occasionally there will be some tingling of an urge, like when they were girls in bathing suits in the hotel where I was staying but I have been accustomed to pushing away the thought Before it takes hold. I have become better at that as time goes on.

22) ive mentioned a few times on the forums that the best defense is a good offense. As time has passed and I have slowly but surely been deleting apps. Trying to slowly but surely keep moving forward. At this point I would not be worried about handing my phone over to someone because I don't think (edit – I know there isn't anything) there's anything on it that I would be embarrassed about. I did this slowly over time because I did not want to awaken the feeling of mayim genvim yumtaku. The stuff was available if I wanted it ...This worked for me probably would not work for many. While I put some restrictions on my iPhone I do not have a filter through tag. My work is not about filters it's about changing myself. If I come to a point where I need the filter, the filter will not help! I may put a more serious one on at some point but not right now.

23) at the same time I looked for different ways to increase my awareness and sensitivity for Kedusha. I bought the book the battle of the generation and read a chapter religiously every night.(edit – about the finish in a few days for the third time!) I also bought a Siddur that focuses on teaching you that davening is a relationship with hashem.

24) along the way over this past year I also spent time developing some relationships with religious people and rabbonim that are happy and encouraging and a positive influence. (edit – I told my full story to a rav and he is the one that I ask halacha questions that can be affected by my story. E.g. listening to music when normally asur)

25) I spend a lot more time now with headphones on especially when walking from the train to work. This can be Daf Yomi related or just music but it takes me out of the streets and puts me in my own world.

It is hard to describe how far I have come in such a short time. I have hinted at the depths of depravity that I have travelled but for most people it's beyond what they could imagine. I have always been a good person at heart and I can't fully explain how I fell so far. I really hope that this lasts and is not just a four month swing in the right direction. Maybe this is how the yidden felt when the mitzriyim were chasing them after yetzias mitzrayim - on the one hand they were finally out, on the other hand they were scared the mitzriyim were chasing them and they would have to go back....

edit – it is now nine months and I am no longer looking over my shoulder. Of course I always have to be vigilant, that will never change. I am comfortable with who I am. I understand (through therapy) much more of my personal vulnerabilities and how to deal with them in a positive way. I am hopeful that I will soon be able to finally have a real relationship with a wife that understands me. My only secret now is GYE. (my friends and family have no idea.) I have opened my heart and soul and cried rivers of tears during the course of some deeply emotional writing on these forums. I can't wait to share it all with someone really special who will do the same with me.

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