

Lessons Learned

Posted by Hashem Help Me - 03 Sep 2018 23:39

It has been quite some time since I have posted on my own thread titled "My Story and G-d Bless GYE". Being that those submissions are in the balei batim forum and therefore off limits to all our single friends here, I figured if I wish to post, it's time to open a new thread.

BH we are at day 627. That's a big number. A number that represents a chunk of life. Different seasons, various occasions, many opportunities, a kaleidoscope of challenges. And with Hashem's help (and as I have written many times - with the help of some great GYE chaverim - specifically "one_day_at_a_time") I have stayed clean.

During this period of growth I have made some observations. Firstly, as a rebbi of mine used to say - no specific type of yid has the "copyright" on yiras shomayim. Eye opening to me has been how individuals from very varying lifestyles all truly want to be close to Hashem. It is not just lip service. It is genuine. I am humbled and amazed how even so called "modern" Jews walk determinedly against the tsunami wave of decadence, indecency, immodesty, and liberalism which is trying to inundate the world and destroy every vestige of holiness in its path. These dear teenagers, married fellows, and even post middle aged heroes ignore the current threatening to drown them and keep moving forward. And of course, being that this scourge does not discriminate, all kehillos and "types" are affected. GYE is like the Kosel - one can find every type of yid there crying for help. In summary, everyone wants to be kadosh v'tahor. Imagine how proud Hashem must be.

A second observation. So many unnecessary tears, so much unnecessary pain. How many bochurim stay clean while in yeshiva and camp only to fall within hours of returning home on their parents' devices which have not been properly filtered. The anguish these boys share is heartbreaking. These are boys who will not enter an internet café or library. They avoid public transportation except when absolutely necessary. They are careful in the street. They are the

brave ones who picked up the phone and shared their most personal and embarrassing secrets with total strangers from GYE. But spending a weekend at home where every other room has an unfiltered device....How naïve can people be? How many drashos have been given, and articles written, and people really still think "it cant happen in my house"?! Is the convenience of unfiltered internet worth these churbonos? I am not passing judgement on anyone specific - just publicizing the very painful issue.

Number three - There are many helpful ideas on GYE. Each successful person here will tell you about the "cocktail" he used to break free. A combination of all or some of the following: shiurim, forum, chats, Taphsic, chizuk emails, 90 day chart, phone conferences, therapy referrals, 12 steps, and of course tefilla, guide people from the abyss of the sewer to the summit of a life of freedom. However I believe if a poll were taken, a great majority of people would credit the human connection as the main weapon in the arsenal that blasted them through and saved them. To hear, and even better, to meet and see, an individual who struggled and now is clean, is a tool that is extremely powerful. It shatters the destructive mindset of "it's impossible - no one gets better". Sitting by therapists, as helpful as they are (and they are part of many people's recovery), is not nearly as powerful as someone being honest and telling you what he used to do and how he stopped. Someone who "has been there and done that" can help rewire the unhealthy thinking and give new perspective - there simply is life, even without sex. Plus one must learn the true and Torah perspective on sexuality. One must be educated that he has been poisoned by the evil and filthy portrayal of an act that we now know is uplifting and elevated, even holy. We are more open to be reeducated by one who initially believed as we did. Secondly, that real person can hold your hand in those first days and weeks when it is really difficult to get started. He can give you the chizuk to get past the withdrawal period. He is an anchor. Thirdly, when you see a successful frum fellow standing before you, you realize you are not the rasha or loser you thought you were. You really are a nice good person who has a struggle. That knowledge gives one more self esteem and resolve to get started. Based on my personal experience I would advise any newcomers to figure out which safe person on the site appears to resonate with them, and then carefully - in the beginning anonymously - reach out and let someone help them.

Lastly (for now), we see a sad issue. So many people join GYE and then disappear. They had hisorerus, found the site, joined, maybe even posted, and then they are gone..... It is incumbent on those of us who have tasted success to make ourselves available to help others. We know the pain anguish anxiety depression and turmoil these chevra are experiencing. We know where their eyes and hands are - even though they don't want to be doing those things - and we have

the ability to help. Some will argue, "I don't know what to do". Others will say, "Now that I am better it isn't good for me to be focused on this so much". True, but its payback time. Do something. And if you really can't, then at least daven your kishkes out for all the strugglers. And of course - give a nice donation to that great place that got us all back on track - the very holy mosad GYE. If not for them, where would I (and you) be today?

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Re: Lessons Learned

Posted by richtig - 28 Aug 2023 10:27

[Hashem Help Me wrote on 24 Aug 2023 04:57:](#)

So i finally had the courage to do it - and the courage to post about it.

As i mentioned in earlier posts, when i was a young teenager, i played around with other guys and we masturbated each other. i switched yeshivas and lost contact with them. This was always a weight that sat on my conscience...

I did some FBI research to locate these two guys. Finally i located one - he is living a few thousand miles away. Bh we were able to speak and he was so nice about it. He accepted my apology for teaching him how to do it (by my doing it to him).

The second fellow i was nervous to call. I always had a feeling that i damaged him psychologically. We used to "attack" each other and then masturbate each other. After "growing up" i realized that this could be traumatic - and although he used to do it to me as well, the first "surprise attack" was from me to him. Well, finally i reached him. He as well accepted my apology and reassured me that i had not "damaged" him, but that unfortunately he had had "relationships" with other guys as well, and had unfortunately suffered a lot. But he does not feel i was the cause for any of his suffering because our interactions were minor compared with others... Of course i was relieved that i finally had reached out, however i was saddened by his difficult years. (I as well went through years of depression and anxiety because of this struggle, and do not wish that torment on anyone).

Slowly, i am being given the chance by Hashem to make amends for my past. I hope other guys with similar experiences muster up the courage to take responsibility for past actions, and by

doing so gain closure....

U'mi yaaneh acharei hamelech

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Re: Lessons Learned

Posted by Hashem Help Me - 13 Oct 2023 11:37

An opinion - The guilt guys carry around from these issues is enormous and often overwhelming. As has been posted many times, the vast majority of strugglers "fell in" at younger ages without receiving proper education and guidance regarding sexuality and the issur of hotzoas zera etc. Numerous attempts to curb the behaviors are derailed by the yi'ush and guilt. It is an amazing "ma'aseh Satan" that guys who have almost no bechira in this issue - measure themselves exclusively with this issue. Nothing else they do counts. Torah, tefilla, dikduk b'mitzvos, chassodim, all don't count because "i am a mushchas, Hashem hates me, and i am a total loser". Step one in getting better is changing this mindset.

Why am i mentioning it now (again)? Because a similar ma'aseh Satan is cropping up. Numerous guys here who are really working on themselves, - some of them BH very successfully - are convinced that they are the causes of the horrific loss of life in Eretz Yisroel. The Satan has found a new way to demoralize the oilam. Now it could be that we - along with all of shomrei Torah Umitzvos - bear some responsibility due to our laxity in limud haTorah and/or any of the Taryag mitzvos - and that is something we look to Gedolei Yisroel to point out to us. However i firmly believe that any guy who is working on this inyan, and had the courage and mesiras nefesh to put shame and embarrassment on the side and reached out for help - be it live, on the phone, or email/posting may have actually **saved lives**. Guys who used to act out freely and uncontrollably, now are restraining many many times, and are spending much time and effort to be ne'eman l'Hashem may have been the zchus (along with the zchus haTorah and other mitzvos that so many people do) that caused this horrific attack to not have been much larger rach"l, which obviously could have been the case.

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Re: Lessons Learned

Posted by Hashem Help Me - 28 Feb 2024 23:56

Hi everyone. It has been a while since i posted on one of my own threads, but here goes:

Many guys here are aware that for the last few years an incentive has been offered for fellows trying to break free. A small but choshuv sum of money was offered for tzaddikim that for a personally designed amount of days (most guys it was 30 days) would 1. text daily updates, 2. refrain from any purposeful physical stimulation (except in the context of marriage), 3. refrain from "outside" stimulation - computer imagery/phone calls/books/inappropriate destinations - even non-pornographic, 4. not use an unsafe device even for kosher purposes (except if absolutely necessary - but even then with accountability). Some chevra "cashed in" for many months, until they were confident that they had "graduated". Automatically this system, besides creating accountability and motivation, helped foster a mentor relationship for the newbies attempting to break free. The results were BH astounding, with a very high percentage of guys breaking free completely, and others at least tasting consistent very extended clean times, giving them hope and motivation to keep at it. Many thousands of privately raised dollars were distributed BH.

Guard Your Eyes watched this program develop and "explode". On occasion GYE was able to be involved with funding the reward, but due to technical issues could not be heavily involved. Now that certain legalities and other technicalities were ironed out, GYE will be able to send rewards in a more consistent fashion to many of the participants. GYE has opened a page explaining the program and created a fundraising system to iyh cover what is becoming an enormous budget.

Please consider being part of the program (many reading this may have already been part by being on the receiving end...). Click on the link at your convenience and help save a neshama - guardyoureyes.com/save

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Re: Lessons Learned
Posted by Hashem Help Me - 28 Feb 2024 23:59

Correction:

guardyoureyes.com/save

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Re: Lessons Learned

Posted by Hashem Help Me - 21 Mar 2024 20:42

It has been a while, but i recently posted a poem on a more recent thread that some old timers may not be subscribed to. I think they would like it, so i am copying it here. Yiftach (mentioned in the last stanza) is a recent GYE hero, who BH is doing super and his reaching 90 days was the impetus for this rhyme.

A baby eagle, falls among the chicks,

"Peck peck" he copies, searching for food bits,

Learns to hop, and strut, true chicken pride,

Stays near the coop, avoids the world open wide.

Yet always thirsty, searching for more,

Why with wings, do we prance on the floor?

Envious of objects, flying so high,

That's life as a chicken, he states with a sigh.

One day a man, eyes this strange bird,

Behold it's an eaglet, truly absurd.

Strutting in the mud, eating bugs - peck peck?!

A prince playing with peasants, oy, what a shrek!

He urgently seizes, our young, feathered friend,

Races up the mountain, to the peak - the high end,

Clutching the trembling baby, he whispers - no he screams,

Fly, fly now - stretch out your majestic wings!

He tosses the fowl, way up to the sky,

But our terrified "chick", lets out a fearful cry,

Yet, while tumbling to earth, with trauma and fear,

He uses his wings, to break the fall as he comes near,

Hey, i didn't know, these accordion bumps on my side,

Can actually do something, and open oh so wide.

So, when the two-legged creature, while propelling him up yet again,

Bellowed a shout - You prince - Fly! You're the envy of men.

He opened those wings, majestic and proud,

And zoomed over mountains - beyond valleys shaded by cloud.

Yes, one king redeemed, to claim a destiny - really always his own,

Yet how many of our brothers, are still amongst chicks, eagles all alone?

Take them out of the street, the virtual falsehood of Nations,

Show them their wings, and their royal destinations.

Fly my friends, take off the shackles, dare tread the royal road,

And live "*hecher*" just like Yiftach, with *Malchus sheb'Yesod*.

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Re: Lessons Learned

Posted by gye365s - 30 May 2024 17:48

[Hashem Help Me wrote on 21 May 2019 11:40:](#)

A story that I recently heard gave me chizuk: . . .

Shalom Chevra. I know I'm quoting from 2019, but reading these beautiful posts and wanted to share a recording of (a variation) of the meaningful story Reb HHM posted. It was said over at a GYE event and I hope it can be a source of powerful chizuk. It's only 4 minutes long.

torahanytime.com/lectures/239335

Kol tov.

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Re: Lessons Learned

Posted by kohelp613 - 18 Jun 2024 04:57

[Hashem Help Me wrote on 03 Sep 2018 23:39:](#)

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You did that for me. Around that time. 6 years later, I think I'm finally getting it!!!

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Re: Lessons Learned

Posted by kohelp613 - 18 Jun 2024 05:01

[Hashem Help Me wrote on 27 Dec 2018 03:21:](#)

A recurring theme that comes up is "attacks of lust". Whether due to severe stress, a triggering encounter in the street, extended boredom, or the inability to regulate roller coaster emotions, one faces intense urges which threaten to "explode". Some things that have worked for me. 1. Change locations as soon as possible, especially if alone. 2. Get on the phone with a chaver who is willing to hear the exact details of what I am experiencing - what appears like a monster to me, is just a clinical description of my imagination to him. He can let the air out of the balloon... If I cant get through, I leave a voice mail. Somehow by spelling it all out, it loses the intensity. 3. Exercise in some form. 4. Stay calm. Panic and its over. Accept that good normal people have urges. It is not bad to have urges, it is bad to act on them. Knowing to expect these "attacks" from time to time also minimizes their effect. Hatzlocha to all - I hope this was helpful.

I wrote this a little while ago

im learning also that life is often, basically, very uncomfortable. a human being is supposed to be able to deal with that and just move through that - but with the internet, there is this very strong temptation to instantly soothe and numb one's feelings - not just with schmutz but even just scrolling around. one enormous massive bracha that the challenge has given me is getting rid of the smart phone and basically all of the internet except for work and chess and torah things which is such a cheirus to be able to focus on hashem and torah... forget the schmutz even just stam all of the endless distractions. I feel very sorry for people who are still using smart phones honestly. ive been using this flip phone for like half a year now and it's been perfect. and the gen tech set up is perfect. it was challenging to figure it all out. im very happy. thank you for your continued support and time."

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Re: Lessons Learned

Posted by freespirit - 21 Aug 2024 03:54

In my yeshiva years I had some mutual masterbation friends. I don't think it's uncommon, it's just very discreet. There were only a couple but they were long in duration. It's part of groeing up.

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Re: Lessons Learned
Posted by Hashem Help Me - 15 Sep 2024 05:24

In many of the sipurei tzaddikim from bygone years, there appear "hidden tzaddikim" - unassuming individuals that appeared to be simple, yet they were oh so great. One could pass them in the marketplace and not even realize that he had been in the presence of someone special.

Recently i had the zchus to meet an icon of GYE - Gevurah Shebeyesod, someone who has inspired so many guys over so many years. As unassuming as they come, modest, quiet, yet focused, and bursting with passion. We met on a random street - anyone passing by would simply think we were talking about some mundane issue. Unless they looked deep into his eyes (as i did), they saw "nothing". A master at hiding himself. What should i say? Now i know those stories of hidden tzaddikim are true. Not that i ever doubted it - but now i know it.

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Re: Lessons Learned
Posted by lionking - 15 Sep 2024 13:47

[Hashem Help Me wrote on 15 Sep 2024 05:24:](#)

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I don't have much to add. Gevurah Shebyesod has been helpful for me in the past and helped me immensely when I was going through a difficult time.

All I can add is, "It takes one, to recognize one!"

Both of you should be able to keep up being marbeh kvod shamayim on this world and be zoche to be the conduit of hashpoas hakedusha in this world.

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Re: Lessons Learned

Posted by Hashem Help Me - 10 Jan 2025 20:40

Today i happened to be ba'al tefila for Selichos etc (Asara b'Teves). During Avinu Malkeinu while saying *M'na mageifa mi-nachalosecha*, a new *teitch* for *mageifa* entered my mind - so many guys are struggling, suffering, and are tormented. So many sweet bochurim are losing the simchas ha-chaim of the best years of their lives. So many marriages experiencing heavy trauma. Such destruction of wonderful people's self worth, self confidence, and pride. And such staggering numbers of those who feel hopeless. Is this not a mageifa? So let's have in mind to beg Hashem to get rid of **this** mageifa.

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