

To sobriety and beyond!

Posted by obormottel - 02 Nov 2011 07:09

Ninety one days ago I was miserable and despondent. I was in a relapse from an attempted (and quite short-lived) sobriety effort. As always, the renewed filth-a-thon was dragging me deeper than ever before, forcing to search out darker and darker fantasies and visions. The lowest point of that particular escapade was arguably from the lower ones in my adult life: the night before, I got up in front of the whole shul and made a public "siyum" on a maseches I haven't finished learning. And it hit me really hard: the realization that I had no integrity left, that I can lie to dozens of people who are my friends, my Rabbis, my sons' teachers; that I can say the wonderful words of Hadran Aloch and know that I am lying....and all because pictures and videos of people doing all kinds of deviant acts take up so much of my life, that I am only faithful to god of orgasm. That is my only true commitment, for which I would lie, deceive, manipulate, throw a fit over, neglect responsibility, assign blame.

By then, I have already instinctively made the first step: I acknowledged my problem for what it is, admitted that I am powerless to stop it, and wrote to my Rebbe begging for help. I may have davened that day for Siyata d'Shmaya, too: because while browsing some Israeli website, I saw a GYE banner.

Ninety one days later, I am, by the Grace of G-d, ninety days clean from intentional watching of pornography and masturbation.

Poischim b'cvoid achsanya: I owe hakoras hatziv to the Riboinoi shel Oilom and Rabbeinu Guard Meshichoi, and the GYE family. I love bickering with Dov, shmoozing with Bardichev, exchanging thoughts with Alexeliezer, Zemiroshabbos, Gevura shebeYesod, Gibbor120, Yosef Hatzadik, Shmeichel.....and everyone else whose name is omitted solely due to space constraints. Thank you! Thank you to Mordechai, who pledged \$90 to GYE if I stay clean for 90 days. Thanks to our newest moderator, UAJ, for a consistent flow of good ideas.

Thanks to all the new guys (can you even see me, I'm so high up in the clouds?) for letting me rant and vent on your threads.

Originally, I was going to wait till the end of ninety days and refer back to the handbook, and to the "GYE in the Nutshell" for whether I need additional help. Thank G-d I realize now I will always need additional help.

So I hope to use this thread as an interactive journal (like so many people here have) and take you guys with me to

SOBRIETY AND BEYOND!

SOBRIETY AND BEYOND!

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Re: To sobriety and beyond!

Posted by gibbor120 - 12 Jun 2012 20:31

[obormottel wrote on 10 Jun 2012 06:26:](#)

I love this GYE PLACE.

Gibbor is celebrating 3 year anniversary, Elyah - one year sober, and UAJ two.

It makes me very happy. Those are all great guys, and the track record is thanks to their hard work.

uh... and my wife finding out and having to go through all that crying etc again if I mess up. That

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Re: To sobriety and beyond!

Posted by obormottel - 12 Jun 2012 21:22

[gibbor120 wrote on 12 Jun 2012 20:31:](#)

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Well, that's hard work. KIU!

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Re: To sobriety and beyond!

Posted by 1daat - 18 Jun 2012 05:49

has something to do with it too

Hi OB, thanks for the post and brochos. Summer is such a pain. It should just be cancelled and be done with it. Here's a bright spot: A palates class has been scheduled in my office building, the same time I arrive at work. I almost fell into the flower into the flower bed trying to keep my eyes down.

I don't know what happened to the entitlement to fantasy thing, but I don't seem to do it so much. But I can relate. It's that same pulling myself away from something I love. Doesn't matter if it's a look, or food or reading the funnies instead of davening on time. It's all pretty much the same for me. "I won't and you can't make me". "OK," He says. "So I won't make you. Now you'll have to make *yourself* stop by yourself." "I can't stop. I've tried, Tatteh, I can't stop". "OK", He says, "So now will you let ME make you?"

What's all this talk about nuts? And is Edge un-banned?

kol Hakovod

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Re: To sobriety and beyond!

Posted by obormottel - 18 Jun 2012 15:13

Yep, I live on a street with a yoga studio and casting agency. Used to love staring out the window...I guess I still *would* love it...

Thanks for checking in...

M.

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Re: To sobriety and beyond!
Posted by ImGonnaWin - 18 Jun 2012 17:12

I owe you a few calls.

Do not let me get away without making them!

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Re: To sobriety and beyond!
Posted by obormottel - 18 Jun 2012 18:25

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is this good enough?

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Re: To sobriety and beyond!
Posted by obormottel - 18 Jun 2012 21:38

Cross-reference, because it's so precious. Elyah must have put a ton of work into it, the least we (the beneficiaries) can do, is to put it in action and send it down the grapevine.
[Eye.nonymous wrote on 17 Jun 2012 14:04:](#)

ADDITIONAL TOOLS FOR RECOVERY

IMPROVE RELATION WITH SELF

EMERGENCY TOOLS

1. Short prayer, "I'm powerless, please G-d help me!"
2. Move somewhere else. (Get away from the trigger!)
3. Pick up litter.
4. Sing (or hum) a favorite tune. Or listen to music.
5. Call someone from the program or the forum NOW. (Or post)
5. Get to a meeting AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. (Get to the forum)
6. When you're angry: Ask yourself, "What am I ashamed of right now?"

HAVING A PROGRAM

7. Participate in the fellowship of the program.
8. Take the Step Zero questionnaire.
9. Admit complete defeat.
10. Answer the 20 Questions found in the White Book (pg 8).
11. Get a sponsor.
12. Treat your sponsor's suggestions as orders.
13. Work the steps (all 12 of them!).
14. Have a daily program (but not one's own).
15. Read the "Just for Today" card every morning.
16. Live in the solution (and not in the problem).

MEETINGS

17. Don't lust, and go to meetings.
18. Home group.
19. 90 meetings in 90 days (temporary measure).
20. Start a meeting.
21. Take on a commitment.
22. 5 meetings a week (regular program).
23. Telephone meetings.
24. SA Net.
25. Step 1 meetings.
26. Check meetings.

BASIC SELF CARE

27. Zero tolerance for lust.
 28. Avoid all known triggers--people, places, and things.
 29. Abstain from all mood-altering chemicals.
 30. Avoid emotion-rocking activities.
 31. Abstain from sugars and white flour.
 32. Write a Pornography-free certificate.
 33. Dump sexualized clothing.
 34. Know clearly: What is sex with self?
 35. Find yourself clean forms of entertainment.
 36. TV and Movie abstinence.
 37. Ask yourself, "What am I feeling right now?"
 38. Early to bed, early to rise...
- H.A.L.T. (Hungry, Angry, Lonely, Tired)

- 39. Keep phone beside bed.
- 40. International phone numbers.
- 41. Healthy food
- 42. Moderate exercise
- 43. Accountability or filtration software

INTENSE EGO DEFLATION

- 44. Get out of self
- 45. Practice rigorous honesty
- 46. Talk in detail to sponsor
- 47. What am I not telling my sponsor?
- 48. Over my dead body
- 49. Am I done with lust?
- 50. Am I in or out of SA (GYE)?
- 51. Openness
- 52. Ask for feedback
- 53. Ask for reality checks
- 54. Willingness
- 55. Do what I don't want to do
- 56. Clean the toilet
- 57. Pray out loud
- 58. Litany of Humility

ON THE STREET

- 59. Take a different road to avoid triggers.
- 60. The SA (or GYE) salute.
- 61. Custody of the eyes.
- 62. Paving stones and rooftops.
- 63. Flick your eyes to the top left.
- 64. Shake your head.
- 65. Snap the elastic band.
- 66. Don't breath through your nose.
- 67. "G-d, may I find in You what I'm looking for in that woman (etc.)"
- 68. "G-d, take away my lust. I pray for her (etc.)."
- 69. "G-d, please take away this image (or fantasy)"
- 70. Bookend risky situations.

DECISION MAKING

- 71. What's my next right action?
- 72. Rushing is not sober.
- 73. What would my sponsor do?
- 74. What would my sponsor say?
- 75. Take an action of love.
- 76. If I can't reach my sponsor, the answer is "no."
- 77. If in doubt, leave it out.
- 78. Always have a plan, and use it.

GOOD ATTITUDES

- 79. Abstinence from lust is the most important thing in my life without exception.
- 80. All hits are toxic; I refuse them.
- 81. I won't act out--no matter what.
- 82. It's none of my business.
- 83. Who I am is none of my business.
- 84. Bring reality into situations.
- 85. No one is flirting with me.
- 86. No one is lusting after me.
- 87. This is not a sexual situation.
- 88. Only a sick person would respond to my lustful advances.
- 89. Sex is only a small part of any real relationship.
- 90. Clean and Sober.
- 91. Attitude of gratitude.
- 92. Easy does it.
- 93. One day at a time.
- 94. Keep it simple.
- 95. This too, shall pass.
- 96. Three thinks is the limit.
- 97. Let go and let G-d.
- 98. First things first.
- 99. Acceptance is the answer to all my problems today.

THINGS TO REMEMBER

- 100. The pain and the loss.
- 101. My addict never sleeps.
- 102. My addict lies.
- 103. I am not smarter than my addict.
- 104. Run the movie through to the end.
- 105. The joy of recovery.
- 106. If I take an action, my feelings will follow.
- 107. Keep learning about recovery.

IMPROVE RELATION WITH G-D

SURRENDER, PRAYER, AND MEDITATION

- 108. Surrender in every moment
- 109. Meditate on the Serenity Prayer
- 110. Select 12-step prayers
- 111. Daily quiet time
- 112. Invite G-d in
- 113. G-d's will discernment tool
- 114. Envision the presence of G-d
- 115. Examine old ideas about G-d
- 116. Came... Came to... Came to believe

MAINTAIN A FIT SPIRITUAL CONDITION

- 117. Pray every morning and every evening
- 118. Read SA and AA literature

- 119. Write fear lists
- 120. Maintain a gratitude list
- 121. Restart your day anytime with the Serenity Prayer
- 122. Daily sobriety renewal
- 123. Contact your sponsor regularly
- 124. Take **Good Orderly Directions**
- 125. Make a written 10th step
- 126. Write about what's bothering you

ENLARGE ONE'S SPIRITUAL LIFE

- 127. Attend a religious service at least once a week
- 128. Move from fear to love
- 129. Listen to the Joe and Charlie AA workshop
- 130. Keep a diary
- 131. Read spiritual literature

IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH OTHERS

FORGIVENESS AND AMENDS

- 132. Forgive them all (step 8.5)
- 133. "I was wrong when..."
- 134. Who do I least want to meet today?
- 135. Traffic Sobriety.
- 136. Do whatever your sponsee refuses to do.
- 137. Rescuer, Victim, Abuser
- 138. Pray together

FRIENDSHIPS

- 139. Work with another SA (or GYE person)
- 140. Stick with the winners
- 141. Stay in the present
- 142. What you think and what you feel and what you do...
- 143. Put the welfare of others first

SERVICE

- 144. How are you?
- 145. How can I be of service?
- 146. Always say "yes" to SA (or GYE) requests
- 147. Take on a service commitment
- 148. Sponsor others
- 149. Buddy list
- 150. Rotate out in good time

CARRYING THE MESSAGE

- 151. Call two newcomers every day
- 152. Share your experience, strength, and hope
- 153. Give your sobriety date
- 154. Quit preaching - tell them about the illness

155. Find your own Dr. Bob

156. Laugh

[MISCELLANEOUS](#)

157. Twelve steps to insanity

158. The pre-recovery promises

159. Hang out with your own gender

160. Write yourself a letter (and reply)

161. [Slogans of recovery](#)

162. Prayer: G-d, please help me have a positive sobriety.

163. Prayer: G-d, please help me see straight.

164. Increase your awareness of your perceptions and motives.

165. Talk, feel, trust

166. The Ramban's letter

167. Torah

168. Is this good for my recovery or not?

169. Whatever I place my recovery in front of will flourish; whatever I place in front of my recovery won't.

170. Humility, Fearlessness, Honesty

171. Watch out for RID (Restlessness, Irritability, Discontent).

172. BYOB (Bring Your Own Book)

173. Write your old ideas

174. SA and recovery audio recordings

175. [Back to Basics](#)

176. [Big Book on Audio](#)

177. Al-Anon prayer

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Re: To sobriety and beyond!

Posted by ImGonnaWin - 24 Jun 2012 19:36

That's good.

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Re: To sobriety and beyond!

Posted by Dov - 24 Jun 2012 19:52

[ImGonnaWin wrote on 18 Jun 2012 17:12:](#)

I owe you a few calls.

Do not let me get away without making them!

Pardon me but exactly who is responsible for who's recovery here?

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Re: To sobriety and beyond!

Posted by obormottel - 28 Jun 2012 00:42

I think somewhere in the holy books (maybe Rambam) it says that you know that you actually have done tshuvo is when the same situation arises, you withstand the temptation this time. I'm sure Machshova Tova can find the chapter and verse and the exact loshoin, in fact I would be grateful if you did...

But here is a personal story from today.

I was in a check out line, and when my turn came, this pretty black girl behind the counter said: "Wow, you have beautiful eyes!"

Many, many years ago, I was in a check out line in a different store, in a different city.

When it was my turn to pay, a young and pretty girl behind the cash register said: "Wow, you have beautiful eyes!".

Both times, I said "Thank you" and modestly lowered my gaze. The difference was, however, that in that old story, my mind immediately started racing and spew out mad thoughts like "She's into me, she's making a move on me, I should ask her out, I gotta find out when her shift is over, and take her to a movie, and then have sex with her".

Why, with me being away from wife and kids in a strange town and having the whole evening to myself, it seemed like a really sound idea.

I paid and left the store, but the fantasy stayed with me for a very long time (so much so that I remember it today) and for the longest time I was beating myself up for not asking her out and missing out on an opportunity. I would often fantasize and act out with myself with the above scenario playing in my head.

Today, after acknowledging the compliment, I turned my head away, without further contemplation. When the de'javu became apparent to me, I prayed for that woman to have a peaceful day, free of either emotional or physical injury. And I asked Hashem to help me find in Him whatever I would have been looking for in her.

And then I remembered the Rambam....

I surrendered my thoughts this time and followed through on my willingness to not fantasize, and I think I redeemed those demons I created when I have been obsessing over an innocent compliment many years ago.

Any thoughts? (Other than the obvious, that I may indeed have beautiful eyes....ooops, I said too much, now you know who I am...darn it!)

Mottel (the one with the eyes)

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Re: To sobriety and beyond!

Posted by Blind Beggar - 28 Jun 2012 12:50

What a great post! I can relate to your fantasy trips very well. Hashem has sent you a message to show you are doing well. That doesn't happen every day.

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Re: To sobriety and beyond!

Posted by gibbor120 - 28 Jun 2012 13:53

I can relate to the rerun of fantasies over and over. In real life, she slaps you in the face and calls you some names I can't write here. Thanks for sharing the story.

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Re: To sobriety and beyond!

Posted by Machshova Tova - 28 Jun 2012 14:52

[obormottel wrote on 28 Jun 2012 00:42:](#)

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The source is Gemara Yoma 86b:

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It is also in Rambam Hilchos Teshuva 2:1.

Anyhow, your story is awesome, and an inspiration for all of us. Keep it up - for your sake and ours!

MT

[obormottel wrote on 28 Jun 2012 00:42:](#)

Mottel (the one with the eyes)

I thought Elyah was the one with the eye (Or is he the one-eyed?).

MT

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Re: To sobriety and beyond!

Posted by gibbor120 - 28 Jun 2012 15:31

[obormottel wrote on 28 Jun 2012 00:42:](#)

Mottel (the one with the eyes)

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