

Shomer's Journal

Posted by mevakesh - 18 Dec 2008 19:22

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I just wanted to start a new thread here to track my progress.

Today is day 7 and I am doing reasonably well B"H. I have been reading the chizuk e-mails every morning and reading the forum periodically throughout the day.

Will try and stay strong through the weekend and will *bili neder* be on Sunday's support call w/ Elya.

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Link to my original post on GUE [here](#)

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Re: Shomer's Journal

Posted by the.guard - 28 Feb 2009 18:26

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I updated your chart. Welcome to Level 5!

90 days is within sight, you'r past the half way mark :-)

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Re: Shomer's Journal

Posted by mevakesh - 03 Mar 2009 19:16

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I am sorry to disappoint everyone, but I slipped this past Sunday at day 53.

I really do not feel like getting into the details now, but the bottom line is this. I was hoping that I could do this on my own, but in light of this last slip I acknowledge that going it solo might not be realistic. At the behest of GUE and my accountability partner boruch, I have decided to attend SA meetings.

It is only as a result of these boards as well as boruch's decision to attend meetings himself that I would even consider going.

As GUE is fond of quoting Rabbi Twerski ... this is a spiritual cancer and when someone r"l has cancer, what would they not do to get better.

I am ready to do what it takes *bezras Hashem* ...

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Re: Shomer's Journal

Posted by Ykv\_schwartz - 03 Mar 2009 20:28

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Shomer,

We are all so sorry to hear that you fell. But I have no doubt that you will pick yourself up and move right along. You should realize that with every fall comes new wisdom. You attain wisdom with the keen workings of the y"h. He constantly tries new tricks, and you as well have to learn new tricks. The chovos halevavos makes this point clear in yichud hamaaseh as he elaborates beyond belief on every nook and cranny of of the y"h. And how after each fall, a person becomes wiser. But as you get wiser, he gets wiser.

Over my long and hard years of battle I have always gained something new. A new insight into myself, and a new insight into the Y"H. It is crucial to look into yourself and ask yourself why you fell. This is imperative. Ultimately, the fall was internal. Yes, having group therapy would help a lot. But at the end of the day you must learn yourself. You need to become in touch with yourself. The purpose of group therapy is just that. It will help you get an touch with yourself as you speak it out with other people. But learning and understanding yourself is crucial. So take this time and analyze yourself. I think all of us, including yourself, will benefit greatly if you could share with us how you fell and what you thinks your mistakes were. What would you do differently? What should you do differently going forward.

I would like to share with you and others a post I recently wrote outlining caveats for 'post-addicts'. As I once went six months, I have a lot to share from my personal fall. [Here is the post](#)

keep up your determination. May Hashem be with you

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Re: Shomer's Journal

Posted by boruch - 03 Mar 2009 20:48

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[Ykv schwartz wrote on 03 Mar 2009 20:28:](#)

You should realize that with every fall comes new wisdom.

The fall which brings to the realization that **the only way to beat addiction is by being ready to do whatever it takes** is the fall that brings true wisdom.

Shomer, You are a constant inspiration to me and without you I would never have come to these forums. **I know how far you were from going to SA and you have gone a very long way in a very short time.**

You will certainly be an inspiration and challenge to many more who are not yet ready to join a 12 step group.

**May Hashem make us all succeed in our quest to return to Him belev sholeim.**

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Re: Shomer's Journal

Posted by the.guard - 04 Mar 2009 01:04

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Shomer, I have tears in my eyes. Not because you fell, but because you are just such a beautiful, holy Neshama who is willing to learn from your falls, admit powerlessness and **do anything necessary to succeed!**

It is 3 AM the night before my son's bris and I am thinking how Shomer is giving his heart over to Hashem for circumcision, without looking back. I am watching the transformation happening to beautiful Yidden such as you and Boruch. It's like watching butterflies coming out of cocoons. I am so honored to be part of this all.

Just look what an inspiring post Boruch wrote today to someone:

Lust is not static, it shifts and morphs... I knew sifrei mussar and all the methods for fighting the y"ch. I knew them all and yet in moments of nisoyon, it never occurred to me to practice any of them. Then I started attending 12 steps meetings and started calling members regularly. At first, when I had nisyonos I did not call. Then, after a while I made my first call to a member while I was in the middle of a nisoyon. He asked me why I was fighting the nisoyon and not working the steps. I was totally caught off-guard and was flabbergasted by how original his question sounded. I had been investing hours in going to groups, never once considering actually using the steps to work through my nisyonos.

So, I agreed to use the steps against future nisyonos. The next nisoyon was not long coming and I got ready to surrender to Hashem. Well, if I was surrendering to Hashem I knew what that meant, I would have to see what He wanted me to do in a moment of nisoyon. I knew exactly where to look, I went straight to Rambam Hilchos Issurei Biah (21:19) and saw that the Rambam says "yasiya libo midivrei havai vehashchoso veyifaneh ledivrei torah". And so in surrender to Hashem I said the equivalent of "OK, Hashem You win, from now on I am ready to do it Your way"

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Re: Shomer's Journal

Posted by mevakesh - 04 Mar 2009 14:54

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Thank you for the support and encouragement guard.

Mazel tov again on your tremendous simcha.

I still owe you 90 days.

Today is day 3.

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Re: Shomer's Journal

Posted by the.guard - 07 Mar 2009 22:00

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I updated your chart, and where it says "Longest Recent Previous Streak" it now says 52 instead of 23!! That's more than double! I am sure Hashem sees your determination and he will give you true success through the new venues you are trying. Keep strong and keep posting!

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Re: Shomer's Journal

Posted by mevakesh - 08 Mar 2009 02:51

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Thanks GUE for the support.

I plan on attending an SA meeting in the near future (hopefully tomorrow schedule permitting). I am davening that Hashem should give me hatzlacha through this medium. boruch has bought the SA white book for me and I have started reading already. I would not have had the courage to go to meetings if not for boruch, so thank you boruch for your continued support. You are a

tremendous asset to these boards and an inspiration to me personally. We may not see eye to eye about everything and I was certainly skeptical of your grandiose entrance to the forums, but I am happy to have been proven wrong. You certainly have followed through on your commitment to do "whatever it takes" to recovery and I tip my hat to you. May you continue successfully in your journey to a lifetime of sexual sobriety and have much hatzlacha in all areas of your life.

I was hesitant about going to the meetings for privacy reasons, time constrains as well as personal hesitance (I am more shy than boruch by nature). After this last fall, however, Rabbi Twerski's statement that if a person had r"l cancer, what would they not due to get better. Well I humbly admit to all those here that I cannot do this alone.

May Hashem grant us all a lasting and enduring life of health, happiness, Torah, yiras shamayim and sexual sobriety

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Re: Shomer's Journal  
Posted by the.guard - 08 Mar 2009 10:04

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Check out today's Chizuk e-mail (coming soon!)

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Re: Shomer's Journal  
Posted by mevakesh - 12 Mar 2009 16:33

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Just wanted to post an update. I am now 11 days clean and b"h doing well. I have not had the opportunity to go to a meeting yet as I was extremely busy this past Sunday and was attending to issues that needed to be complete before *tanis esther* and Purim. I have family visiting this weekend, so I am not sure if I will be able to make it this coming Sunday as well. I am committed, however, to attending a meeting and hope to do so at the earliest possible time. I have been reading the SA whitebook and have been learning a lot from that. Step number 1 is critical and is something that I have been very far away from.

Hatzlacha to all

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Re: Shomer's Journal

Posted by the.guard - 12 Mar 2009 21:07

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You are an inspiration!

Share with us all what you learn, as you learn...

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Re: Shomer's Journal

Posted by mevakesh - 16 Mar 2009 17:03

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Well, I went to my first SA meeting yesterday. The meeting was quite large and everyone was very nice. There were no frum yidden except me at the meeting, but I was OK with that. One of the leaders of the meeting came up to me before the meeting started and introduced himself. SA is very friendly to newcomers, so I did feel welcome. I was told that I did not need to participate at my first meeting, but was encouraged to do so at future meetings.

I think that the meat and potato's of the meeting is the sharing period. During the sharing period, individual members will speak for approximately 3 minutes. There was some real pain in that room and it hit home.

Although I did benefit from the meeting, I did not feel that instant "click" right away. I do plan on attending future meetings and will approach it with an open mind.

I had a long talk w/ boruch over the phone on the way home from the meeting and talked to him about my skepticism w/ the steps. My basic question w/ the steps are this ...

I would readily concede that the steps are very effective at combating addiction. I would tend to

think, however, that their effectiveness lie more in the group nature of the meeting rather than anything inherent in the steps themselves. Boruch did, however, making a convincing argument otherwise and has convinced me to approach the steps with an open mind. I owe it boruch and to myself to give the steps a fair shake, so I will be reading up and attempting to implement them.

I was up late Sat. night for work and tried to exploit a basic hole that I thought may allow me to circumvent the filter. I told boruch about this the next day and he has promised to plug the whole on his end.

I am currently on day 15 ...

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Re: Shomer's Journal

Posted by Ykv\_schwartz - 16 Mar 2009 19:40

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[shomer wrote on 16 Mar 2009 17:03:](#)

I would readily concede that the steps are very effective at combating addiction. I would tend to think, however, that their effectiveness lie more in the group nature of the meeting rather than anything inherent in the steps themselves. Boruch did, however, making a convincing argument otherwise and has convinced me to approach the steps with an open mind. I owe it boruch and to myself to give the steps a fair shake, so I will be reading up and attempting to implement them.

I have never done the group meetings but I have done the 12 steps on my own. I can tell you from my own experience how fundamental the steps were to my own growth. It gave me a framework for growth, which is crucial for anyone trying to grow. Meaning, in the past when I tried to break free from addiction, I would focus solely on the addiction itself. I had no particular plan as to how to fight and deal with myself. I just did it. But the 12 steps gave me that framework. You start here and then go here and then etc. This made it easy. It also gave me a bit of excitement in my growth. Every day was something new. Every day I worked on



something else. The other important part was that the 12 steps introduced new concepts that I never really made part of my breaking-free. There was never a general focus of changing my life until the 12 steps came along. The concept of let go and let G-d is such an integral part of breaking free that it is close to impossible without it. The focus on davening became more ingrained in me through the 12 steps. But it is not just davening, you learn to beseech Hashem in a very real way. Fixing the addiction is not about getting one away from the aveiros but from creating a new person within yourself. (it is important to look at the Jewish version of 12 steps [here](#). A lot of my inspiration came from the Jewish version. But the secular version is mostly the same thing with different formulation. )

I must admit that I am only 40 days clean coming off a 3 month downfall, and I therefore do not have much of a say in this matter. However, my point is that in a short time span of 40 days the 12 steps have changed my life. It has given me something that I never had before. There were many times in my life when I broke free and came back. I even went 6 months last year till this past succos. But this time is totally different. My entire focus changed. My whole life is different. I continue to work on the basic principles that I learned, together with major initiatives in avodas hashem. Hashem has removed my desires for P. (I hope it will never come back). I continue to daven to him to prevent those urges from coming and if Chas Shalom they do come I should not fall. The 12 steps help us focus on davening for every aspect of our avodas hashem as we let go and G-d.

So even if you feel that the group setting is not for you (which you may grow into), if all it does is help you understand the principles of the 12 steps then you have done a lot for yourself. But, it is important to understand that you need to live this every waking and sleeping moment of your day. Breaking free should be at the forefront of your mind. It is not just 2 hours of your week. This is not a class that you attend twice a week. This is your life now until you begin to feel internal change. Wherever you are you should review the step that you are holding on. You need to internalize each step. It should become a part of you. At this point, I am not as focused on the 12 steps anymore but uprooting me addiction is a constant avodah. I have no urges but I still work on uprooting inner emotions. I work on creating negative feelings with my past so as to never remember that I actually enjoyed it (see yesterdays' chizuk email about this). I continue to work on teshuvah as we know there are 20 principles/levels of teshuvah.

Good Luck with your new journey. Please keep us posted on your 12 steps

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Re: Shomer's Journal

Posted by the.guard - 16 Mar 2009 23:58

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Shomer, kudos on your hard work and determination.

You are right that a large part of the effectiveness of the 12-step groups comes from the group support and meetings, but as Yaakov said so beautifully: *"Fixing the addiction is not about getting one away from the aveiros but from creating a new person within yourself"*, and **this** is something we learn through the 12-Steps. Bring Hashem into your heart and he will do the work for you.

So keep going to the groups AND keep learning how to implement the 12-Steps into your life. You are fortunate to have Boruch as your partner, and fortunate to have finally admitted you can't do it alone!

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