

A fall and a new beginning

Posted by Binyomin5766 - 24 Sep 2009 02:09

Well, over the course of the last two days, I had a "slow motion" fall. I began acting out on Monday evening, viewing things on the net that perhaps wouldn't have qualified as a fall, but definitely began the process. Through the day on Tuesday, my thought/fantasy life began getting out of control. Last night (Tuesday) I began acting out by going to definitively inappropriate sites and topped it all off by m****. So, after a little over nine months clean, I have fallen off the wagon. So, now what?

What went wrong? Some things were in my control and some were not. First issue I should have worked on more: guarding my eyes in public places. Second: getting a handle on my thought/fantasy life (i.e. dispose of the fantasy unless I'm going to fantasize about having all the time I want to learn Torah). Third: finding a way to block inappropriate sites on my work computer (perhaps I should just put K-9 on my computer and let Rabbeinu Guard control the password. They are pretty quick to wipe and reload computers at my office so they would be able to get rid of it if they so desired. Question: can they get rid of K-9 that way if they need to?). And out of my control? A one month business trip. All I can do about that is try to prepare better.

I have the further issue, that some here will likely remember, that my wife and children are struggling with their Yiddishkeit in a big way. I have a strong tendency toward depression, anyway, and this particular struggle is a strong push toward depression. For me, depression is a contributing factor, although it is frequently difficult for me to tell which comes first: the depression or the acting out.

At this point I have to confess, last night I really didn't want to come back here ever again. How could I let myself do this? How can I humiliate myself by coming here and admitting what I have done? In the end, though, this place is **LIFE**. Where I went last night is nothing less than death itself, and I want to **LIVE**! Even now, my eyes are welling up to think of it. But even now, the Y"H is actively on the offensive. I can feel the desire as a physical ache. Part of me (the animal soul) wants so badly to give in, but part of me can't go back to living that way: the hiding, the secrets, the lies....

What now? What is my strategy? my approach? Some things won't change, because they shouldn't. I will keep trying to increase my Torah learning to the new level I'm aiming for: one aliya of the Parsha of the week with Rashi, and one Gemara shiur mornings Monday through Friday (the latter after my business trip ends). I will keep trying to work through Mesillas Yesharim (I never make it very far, and I have started over many times. There is just so much

even in Rabbi Luzatto's intro, though, it really isn't a waste). What needs to change, though? I think I have to dive in deeper to the effort this time. I think it is time for me to begin some kind of a 12 steps program. I hope that I might be able to join one of the phone groups here. My job can be pretty demanding in terms of the hours and/or location, but I can make a phone call almost anywhere. I need to make some changes in how I am guarding my eyes, but I'm not sure what that will be quite yet (perhaps one of the tzedakah type vows may be effective here). The fantasy life thing will be quite difficult. At times I find myself fantasizing about my wife (especially in the few days before mikvah time), and that unfortunately only encourages the broader habit. I will have to find some other things to occupy my mind; that will be challenge. The computer issue I discussed above, and depending on the answers I get, it is likely that I will load k-9 on this machine.

At any rate, I am getting quite tired. I have just pulled my third twelve hour day in a row, and tomorrow is likely to be longer. I bid all of you a good night as now begin day 1.

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Re: A fall and a new beginning

Posted by Ano Nymous - 29 Sep 2009 12:22

I am also an all or nothing kind of person. One of the most common misconceptions about Judaism is that it's an all or nothing religion. Of course, it doesn't work like that. The way bechira works into the picture is that each person has a different "all", and no one is expected to give more than their "all". May every member here have a year of successfully giving their all to every endeavor they undertake. My goal this year is to have a completely clean year, so that next yom kippur I can confess to something else :D

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Re: A fall and a new beginning

Posted by Kedusha - 29 Sep 2009 13:57

[Ano Nymous wrote on 29 Sep 2009 12:22:](#)

My goal this year is to have a completely clean year, so that next yom kippur I can confess to something else :D

I share that goal with you. But let's remember our short-term goals: one day at a time, with other slightly longer-term goals - for now, staying clean until Sukkos.

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Re: A fall and a new beginning

Posted by Ano Nymous - 29 Sep 2009 14:42

[Kedusha wrote on 29 Sep 2009 13:57:](#)

[Ano Nymous wrote on 29 Sep 2009 12:22:](#)

My goal this year is to have a completely clean year, so that next yom kippur I can confess to something else :D

I share that goal with you. But let's remember our short-term goals: one day at a time, with other slightly longer-term goals - for now, staying clean until Sukkos.

Of course one should only focus on the short term goals. However, it's still nice to have some long term ones to go along with it. Obviously, there is nothing I can do right now about yesterday or tomorrow, but it is always nice to look back and see how far you've come. Guard, do you see anything wrong with having long term goals?

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Re: A fall and a new beginning
Posted by the.guard - 29 Sep 2009 14:47

Gaze to the sky, but ... watch your step.

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Re: A fall and a new beginning
Posted by Binyomin5766 - 29 Sep 2009 14:48

Part of me would love to set long term goals, but I don't feel especially ready for that quite yet. Having just fallen not terribly long ago, I feel that I really need to focus on the day by day. Each day right now is difficult enough on its own, though not nearly so difficult as the first 90 day fight. I can definitely feel the effects of the previous clean streak, and that is a very good thing.

I'll post later about Yom Kippur; it was an interesting day for me, with various challenges (apart from the obvious difficulties of fasting).

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Re: A fall and a new beginning
Posted by Kedusha - 29 Sep 2009 15:59

[Ano Nymous wrote on 29 Sep 2009 14:42:](#)

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I didn't say that there was anything wrong with long term goals, as long as we don't lose focus of the shorter term goals.

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Re: A fall and a new beginning

Posted by Binyomin5766 - 29 Sep 2009 23:08

So Yom Kippur was very good for me, overall. The davening was energetic, and that is always a plus for me to help me get involved. The odd thing was an issue that kept coming up, and it wasn't my struggle with lust. It was quite crowded, and space was at a premium. I found myself repeated becoming angry at people who were not being careful about how much space they took up. I had to do teshuva for my anger several times through the services. By Neilah though, I had pretty much gotten the anger under control. Still, to have to struggle with that on Yom Kippur was *not* what I was expecting. Of course, Hashem orchestrates all kinds of things just to make us come face to face with our various issues.

I guess I need to deal with anger in addition to my lust addiction. So it goes on the list. Happily, I have been able to stay clean since my fall last week. It shook me pretty hard to have fallen, and I find that urge, while not as strong as when I began my first 90 day journey, is still pretty formidable at times. More than once, I have found myself at the point where I am crying out to Hashem. I am faster to cry out than before, but I probably still need to be quicker on that draw.

I'm going to wrap it up now. My allergies began attacking with a vengeance last night, and the benedryl is kicking in; I'm feeling a little loopy. Maybe, bli neder, I will post later this evening.

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Re: A fall and a new beginning

Posted by Binyomin5766 - 01 Oct 2009 14:29

I'm still holding clean for a full week now.

Big news is that after a month away from home and family, I'm heading home this evening.
Baruch Hashem!

I hate being away from my family, and being away for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur isn't any fun either.

By the way, I tried emailing Boruch a few days ago. Does anyone know if he is away right now or something? I had some questions about his group.

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Re: A fall and a new beginning

Posted by Ano Nymous - 02 Oct 2009 09:29

You can do it Ben!

It's so much easier to pick yourself up and avoid falling back into "the routine" when you have a long clean streak behind you. Keep up the great work, and I'll try to keep up mine :D

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Re: A fall and a new beginning

Posted by Binyomin5766 - 02 Oct 2009 21:11

It's a deal, Ano! A good Shabbos and Yontif.

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Re: A fall and a new beginning

Posted by Binyomin5766 - 05 Oct 2009 20:50

The first two days of Succos went fairly well for me. I didn't have to fight too many purity battles regarding my eye or my thoughts (and that is surely a good thing). Today has been more of a struggle, and that mostly between my ears. The saving thing for today has been a lot of pressure relating to a high profile project I am programming. It hasn't kept my mind completely

where it belongs, but it certainly helps.

A gut (and clean!) Mo'ed to all!

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Re: A fall and a new beginning
Posted by the.guard - 05 Oct 2009 22:32

I guess I need to deal with anger in addition to my lust addiction.

Anger and lust addiction are closer related than they seem... It is all related to living too much in the "self" (which we all do). I highly suggest joining Duvid Chaim's 12-Step group, starting a new cycle on Rosh Chodesh Cheshvan...

Keep up the great work and the inspiring posts... We love to hear from you!

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Re: A fall and a new beginning
Posted by Binyomin5766 - 06 Oct 2009 15:52

I just emailed Duvid for a little more info. Before I make the commitment, I want to make sure I am actually able to be on the call for the whole meeting.

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Re: A fall and a new beginning
Posted by Binyomin5766 - 07 Oct 2009 14:06

I made email contact with Duvid yesterday, and I have decided that I will try to make the plunge

and commit myself to his group. This will pose some real challenges just in the logistics. For instance: I get 30 minutes for lunch and the group meeting lasts an hour. That's probably the biggest problem I can see right now, but perhaps phone calls with a mentor may help me to get through whatever I miss.

Baruch Hashem, I am still clean. Every day has its challenge it seems, whether from within or without, and I still long to improve my response. I am hopeful from all I've read that the 12 step program will provide me with the tools I need to effect some deeper internal changes. In the meantime I have been working to exhaustion every day with about 4 hours sleep a night the last three nights in a row. This will have to change shortly or I am going to drop; I am not one of those fortunate few who can get by on cat naps...

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