

A journey to Hashem

Posted by zvi - 20 Mar 2013 23:54

I am a teenager, aged 16 years old. Since I was 12, I have had lust-related problems. As I have got older, the problems have got worse. It started off with the odd thing, here and there- I was only 12, so I didn't really know what I was doing. I vaguely knew I shouldn't be doing what I was, but it didn't interfere with my life much. As I got older, and I started to find out what I was doing, and the severity of the Aveiros, my 'little problem' developed into an addiction. For the past 2 1/2 years, I have been acting out on a regular basis (at least once a week). Then, finally, I had a clean streak. A proper clean streak. For 66 days. But then it came back. I didn't even see it coming. All I knew was that I was on the computer, doing some school work, and then suddenly I was looking at images that I shouldn't be looking at, and before I could stop myself, I had been motzei zera levatala. Again. That was two months ago. After that, I lasted 14 days, but then it was over. I was doing the aveiros again, but on a much greater level than before. As it stands now, I'm only keeping myself clean for between 1-3 days at a time. Two nights ago, I acted out twice. I was depressed, angry with myself, and- unfortunately- angry with Hashem. How could He do this to me? Didn't he see that I wanted to stop? That I wanted to be close to Him? Anyway, the next day (i.e yesterday), I joined GYE. I'm currently on my second day clean, B'chasdei Hashem. But it's not going to be easy...

=====

=====

Re: A journey to Hashem

Posted by zvi - 24 May 2013 16:27

Well, it worked yesterday, so here I go again...

1:30PM: I turn on my computer, open my emails and GYE.

2:00PM: Opened jewishmusicstream.com, read an email, spent some time on GYE, tried to plan _____, sent an email to my co-_____, and now my mum's home so i'll stop here.

=====

=====

Re: A journey to Hashem

Posted by zvi - 26 May 2013 19:08

Here's something that I wrote a few months ago. It was on one of those long winter motzaei shabossos, and I was feeling really down and depressed, and I just sat down at my computer and wrote. Looking back at it now, it was clearly written with the help of Hashem- everything on

there is so true, and it obviously wasn't written with 'kochi ve'otzem yodi'. So I thought I'd share it with everyone here. I wrote it before I joined GYE, but it fits with all the principles I've learnt on here:

What is life? Life is a path with ups, a path with downs. Life is a mountain, a battle with forces stronger than you and more powerful than you. It is a battle, a war, a ferocious fight to the finish. But YOU CAN DO IT. Why? Because the Eternal is holding your hand. He will fight your wars, win your battles. All you have to do is believe. Believe that He can. Believe that up there, you have a loving Father who is waiting for you to turn to Him and say- please. I need help. I am struggling. I cannot do it on my own. Tatte, I need You. Just looking back at the dark, difficult, yet illuminating history of our people should be enough to teach you this. We are above the ordinary. We are above the natural. Hashem took Avraham Avinu above the stars, to teach him that we, the Jewish people, are above teva, above mazal, above the normal course of life. Whatever situation we are in, whatever problems we have, know that the natural course of things does not apply to us. We are the Bnei Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov. We are not governed by nature. We are above it.

=====
=====

Re: A journey to Hashem
Posted by Gevura Shebyesod - 26 May 2013 19:17

Beautiful!

=====
=====

Re: A journey to Hashem
Posted by Dov - 27 May 2013 02:39

Beautiful. Thanks, Zvi.

=====
=====

Re: A journey to Hashem
Posted by zvi - 28 May 2013 23:09

I slipped today. I didn't fall, B'H, but I came far too close for comfort. It happened because I was

home alone, with my laptop, which is far from being fully filtered...

So, I've decided that, at least for the time being, whenever I'm home alone and I need to use the computer, I'm going to use the family one, which has very good accountability software.

But, on a 'deeper' level (for lack of better word), it was caused by the 'nuclear build-up' that Dov's written about (here guardyoureyes.com/forum/19-Introduce-Yourself/203733-introduction?limit=15&start=15#203913). The need to m*** has been building up for about four days already, but I haven't really noticed it/paid much attention to it. And today I nearly fell because of it. If I don't sort this out, I'm going to fall tomorrow- there's only so long I

=====

====

Re: A journey to Hashem

Posted by syataDshmaya - 29 May 2013 04:21

Hang in there Zvi! If we think about staying clean for days or weeks we get thrown, especially with nuclear build up. One day, or one hour, at a time. "I might fall, but does it have to be today?"

~~can go~~=====

====

Re: A journey to Hashem

Posted by Chachaman - 29 May 2013 04:55

I totally identify, after a while it becomes an ache.

tell yourself this: the ache is temporary. it will likely be gone in a week, a month at most.

Who cares about a slip? we all have slips. they only serve to intensify the ache--but do your best to avoid falling. tell itself that it wont make anything better. eiright after falling, it only gets worse (am I wrong?).

hatzlocha! good luck to you, I'm sure you'll do great.

personally, it took me a while to say "no loopholes in my filter". there's that subconscious voice that says "I cant block that completely, what if I really need it??" Ignore that voicw--B'ezras Hashem, there is a wonderful life ahead without shmutz. right now, the y"h makes it seem impossible, but give it time.

kind of like Dr Manette in A Tale of Two Cities with his shoemaking bench, in case anyone has read that book (might be triggering, but I had to read it for school).

translation: its the y"h that prevents one from honestly sittinf down and cutting down on Internet usage and avoiding loopholes.

try going strong--but don't make this the focus of your life as you sit at home. if u focus on the battle you're doomed to fail. give it over to Hadhem, stop worrying about it, and only fight when you need to, not when you don't need.

that advice is working for me now, but its taken like a year for me to get to this point.

good luck! You're an amazing person!

p.s. sorry for the typos, I'm writing from a k9 browser on Android.

=====

Re: A journey to Hashem
Posted by zvi - 29 May 2013 17:48

Thanks so much SiyataDishmaya and Chachaman. I've realised something from yesterday. Last night (after the slip) I was learning with someone in a Beis Hamedrash, and I suddenly felt repulsed by myself. Who am I? Here I am, learning, pretending to be really holy, and just a few

hours earlier I had gone out of my way, sitting there in a frenzied craze, to go and find disgusting images online? Who am I fooling? Generally, I'm considered a pretty 'shtark' guy, in school, at home, and around generally. And yet, I have this problem. So again, what's going on?

And I realised: I am ill, I am sick, I have a spiritual disease- an addiction- called lust. My frumkeit, and the length of my Shemoneh Esreis, have nothing to do with this, and they're not going to stop it. In fact, nothing is going to stop this. I can have filters, this barrier, that barrier, but as soon as I'm going to be given half a chance, I'll fall again. I can hold it in for a week, a month, I've even gone 66 days before, but after that I'll be gone again.

So, what can help me? The answer, which has been staring me in the face all the time, is: Hashem. He is the only one who can get me out of this rut, out of this impossible situation that I'm in. Before, I'd talked the talk, but did I really believe it? I think not. But it was only last night that I realised it properly.

I think the barrier to what was stopping me realise this was that I didn't understand: Surely this is a nisayon of shemiras einayim, of shemiras habris. This is a test sent to me from Hashem, and I have to pass it. Why should I ask for His help? He wants **me** to pass it, by **myself**. But now I understand- that's not the nisayon. The nisayon is one of bitachon, emuna, anava. The nisayon is to admit that I'm not so amazing or capable after all. I need HELP. And the only one who can give me that help is my creator.

=====
=====

Re: A journey to Hashem
Posted by zvi - 29 May 2013 21:50

Another slip- but this time, I came much closer to falling. I'd actually started to act out before I stopped. I was sitting on my computer, with the bedroom door open, but the Yetzer Hara still seemed to manage to get the better of me. The only other person home was my sister, and she was in her bedroom and wasn't showing any signs of emerging. So I started to look for images again, and before I knew it I was about to m***, when, by pure hashgacha, Mamme Rochel started playitng in my earphones. I was still listening to a jewish music radio station when I was) I love

Mamme Rochel, its a really beautiful song and I thought- right, its a choice between m*** or listening to Mamme Rochel, and I stopped. It was pure hashgacha, and I really didn't deserve it. However, the Ribono shel Olam wanted to give it another chance- I just have to grab it, and go with.

=====
=====

Re: A journey to Hashem
Posted by Gevura Shebyesod - 29 May 2013 22:06

Somech Hashem Lechol HaNoflim...

=====

=====

Re: A journey to Hashem

Posted by gibbor120 - 29 May 2013 22:18

KOMTIL:
[Zvi wrote:](#)

I think the barrier to what was stopping me realise this was that I didn't understand: Surely this is a nisayon of shemiras einayim, of shemiras habris. This is a test sent to me from Hashem, and I have to pass it. Why should I ask for His help? He wants **me** to pass it, by **myself**. But now I understand- that's not the nisayon. The nisayon is one of bitachon, emuna, anava. The nisayon is to admit that I'm not so amazing or capable after all. I need HELP. And the only one who can give me that help is my creator.

Beautiful! dov helped me to see that it's our ga'avah that is stopping us. **I** have to beat this thing. **I** will fight it. etc etc.

The answer is really the EXACT opposite. I need to come humbly asking for help, and not worry about "fighting the holy fight" which is usually just masked ga'avah.

It's like the good 'ol Chinese Finger Trap. The harder you pull, the more stuck you get. The trick is to stop fighting it, and humbly ask Hashem to remove it.

=====

=====

Re: A journey to Hashem

Posted by Chachaman - 29 May 2013 22:35

Like your earlier posts, that post knocked it out of the ballpark! Beautiful! Thank you so much for that!

As far as the slip goes, we have to define what it means to be in a public place. When my brother was still at home last year (he's in college now), sometimes he'd be home, tucked upstairs in his room with ridiculous music playing, and I'd be on the couch downstairs slipping. For all intents and purposes, was I alone in the house? Yes. I'm sure you realize that too, and this paragraph isn't a big chiddush.

However, it is hard, because sometimes we need to use the internet, and we can't expect to take our siblings out of their rooms to come watch us.

I think pshat is that we just have to cut down on computer usage, plain and simple. It is hard when we need the computer for work purposes--so I think we can create different systems or Kabbalos that will limit our usage of unrelated things.

Allow me to share something that works for me, but may or may not apply to anyone else:

For me, the most important thing is to reaffirm every day why I want to stop. I think early on (like a year and a half ago or so), for me it used to be "so that no one will ever find that out about me," or (get this) "the future gadol hador shouldn't look at shmutz", or even "so that none of my friends at (public) school will be able to laugh at me for it", or "so that it won't taint my unvarnished reputation at shul", or finally, "so that I'm superior to those people who do look at and depend on shmutz". Is it any wonder I had no success back then?

Now, I had several issues back then, probably an inflated sense of ga'avah to compensate for social insecurity and isolation, but that's a different sugya altogether. I doubt that other people would have such reasoning like that.

I think the breakthrough for me has come in understanding both what I am up against, and why I want to quit (certainly not for ga'avah related reasons, like "Hashem" has given me a nisayon, and I want to prove how good I am that I have gone there and done teshuvah). Instead, I feel I want to quit not only for negative reasons like because it's a serious issur, because it's bittul zman, because it will harm my future children and spouse, because it fosters insecurity and

makes me a worse person, and because I lose complete control of myself; but more importantly for positive reasons, namely to get closer to Hashem and improve my quality of life.

I'm struggling a bit now too. Right now, I'm just going to worry about TODAY...I know I can stay clean right now, so I'll leave the future to Hashem.

I totally identify with the slipping and searching like a maniac...I've done that so many times in the past. Congrats on avoiding falling--that takes tremendous strength (and of course a bit of Hashem's help too)!

Keep us posted! Good luck.

=====
=====

Re: A journey to Hashem

Posted by gibbor120 - 29 May 2013 23:12

[Chachaman wrote:](#)

For me, the most important thing is to reaffirm every day why I want to stop. I think early on (like a year and a half ago or so), for me it used to be "so that no one will ever find that out about me," or (get this) "the future gadol hador shouldn't look at shmutz", or even "so that none of my friends at (public) school will be able to laugh at me for it", or "so that it won't taint my unvarnished reputation at shul", or finally, "so that I'm superior to those people who do look at and depend on shmutz". Is it any wonder I had no success back then?

Now, I had several issues back then, probably an inflated sense of ga'avah to compensate for social insecurity and isolation, but that's a different sugya altogether. I doubt that other people would have such reasoning like that.

I'm certain that many many people "have such reasoning like that".

=====

====

Re: A journey to Hashem

Posted by Dov - 30 May 2013 02:11

Of course you are right, Zvi. You cannot hold on forever. Some well-meaning folks may try to 'encourage' you by saying "No! You can do it. Hayad Hashem tiktzor?!" But they have not been masturbating and hiding the porn and doing whatever you may have been doing the way you have been doing it for as long as you have done it so far...so they do not have a clue what problem they are actually giving advice *for*.

We know that the "one day at a time" idea is *not* a gimmick. It is not about pretending that there is not tomorrow and that I only need to be clean for today". That's not it, at all. Real recovery is not based gimmicks and tricks, (like nedarim and/or pretending that 'it is only for today' - when we know in our hearts that our *only* true goal is 'clean forever'). Real recovery is not even based on anything that begins with the word 'not' - it's not about 'not' drinking, 'not' masturbating, 'not' shooting up heroin, 'not' gambling.

So what is it?

It's basis is learning how to live with a faith that works. Faith - the ideas - is not enough. It's about whether it works. Chovos haLevavos is about the same thing, in addressing normal things in real life not addictions of course. Info is not the answer: the answer is taking the right action.

When Hashem says "hayom" over and over in the Torah, it's time to trust Him that reality is only today. Hashem says 'today' in Sh'ma twice because it is the truth. Chaza"l tell us to "consider the Torah as if it were a new announcement, just given today" - because **today is the only reality there is**. It's not a gimmick, at all.

The problem with this knowledge is this: our *hearts* (not our knowledge!) get in the way of *living* with this idea. Our hearts tell us things like, "Oy! What I did yesterday was sooo horrible! I am obviously oversexed and need more of that! Why bother denying myself the pleasure. I am such a rosho anyhow. G-d is disgusted with me anyhow, and I will not grow to be a tzaddik anyway, not a real gadol baTorah for here I am not the best guy in Yeshivah and on top of that I masturbated again last night!"

All nahrishkeit. What does the past have to do with what I can or cannot do today? Yes, it shows my tendencies and problems - so accepting them as facts and moving on with the real me is the work of today. Not trying to wish them away or regretting them. Acceptance is the key for me and others. Few of us have true acceptance of our limitations and tendencies, very few of us.

And what relevance does 'the future' or my apparent failure at my big imaginary ambitions have any bearing on my success with today with G-d? None at all. Acceptance of my limitations is really just acceptance of G-d's Will for me. But we buck it. And well-meaning people try to 'motivate' us by holding out promises of 'greatness' or 'holiness'....all vanity. Gayvoh-based recovery is just a revolving door, for me.

The humble way seems to be the *accepting* way. Living with G-d today is only possible when the gravity of the past and the crushing weight of the future are lifted clean off of me **for today**. And it is really a simple matter of acceptance of Hashem's Will for me today - for right now. As long as our lust for gadlus burns in us, we find we cannot do that, though.

So, Zvi, I am not saying any big chiddushim to you, perhaps. But instead of 'telling yourself this, or telling yourself that' to win the battle and lose the war, can you say 'to heck with the sperm and not sperm issue and to heck with my aveiros and mitzvos - they are not what this is about at all, and just **throw yourself on G-d like a baby** - just for a few minutes today? Can I? Can you take action in that regard? Real action, like letting go of your (my) dependence on people's approval and opening up to another person recovering from sex and lust in person? Like getting some honest writing (*by hand*, not on the computer at all) down on paper about what I am feeling today and what I want, what's sensible for today and what I can really do instead of philosophizing today?

) You can accept your limitations and yourself. Hashem has always known you as you really are. He does not have a portrait of you he looks at and cries over 'up there' of 'what you could have become/should have become'. Those schmuessen/motivational speeches are *poison* for addicts and *just not true anyhow*.

=====
=====