

with Hashem's help

Posted by ahavas hashem - 25 Jul 2013 19:33

There are so many things that are racing through my head that its hard to put them into words. I'll start with explaining why I started this thread on the forum. I first came across GYE about three months ago. I have been slowly exposing myself to the various tools that exist on this site. Initially, I found it to be overwhelming, but decided to utilize one thing at a time. I have read through part of the handbook and am still working my way through it for the first time. When I saw that I was still falling, I signed up for the daily chizuk emails. Then, about two months ago, I started my journey on the 90 chart. In the last two months I have learned a lot about my problem and am hopeful that the chizuk, suggestions and companionship in this area will help me find my way. Like I said, my thoughts are all over the place right now so I don't want to get into the struggles I've faced in the last few months. Over the course of time and the more I post, these things will iy"h be spelled out.

I do want to declare what my acting out problem is. It took me a long time to finally realize that I have a serious, chronic (possibly addictive, but I'm not there yet- maybe I should be) masturbation problem. I have been masturbating since I was 13 and there have been certain tekufos of my life when I was masturbating almost every day and sometimes multiple times a day. This, I believe, is my main area of struggle. I have as a teenager and single bachur occasionally viewed pornography. This is not something that I have done in a long time and it was not something I did consistently enough to become a real problem.

I know that there is probably a lot that should be included in this introduction that I am leaving out, but this is a very hard thing for me to do. I am not the kind of person that turns to others for help and I rarely share personal information with others. However, I believe posting on the forum and learning to share with others is a necessary step in my recovery. Hopefully with Hashem's help I will begin to truly live life.

And today is day 1! And [b]today[b] I will not fall!

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Re: with Hashem's help

Posted by ahavas hashem - 16 Aug 2013 04:59

Today was my 22nd day clean.

A thought I had today. I saw someone wearing a Marine Corp t-shirt that had the following on it: "All give some. Some give all." I thought to myself, "Which group do I want to be in."

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Re: with Hashem's help

Posted by ahavas hashem - 17 Aug 2013 00:35

I am thank G-d still clean on my 23rd day. I can't get over how upside down my life has turned in the last three weeks since I began this most recent journey. I really feel like I'm starting my life over from scratch and building new foundations. (Maybe I should be making an addition that looks nicer than the original- i don't know what I'm saying... this is a confusing analogy!)

My wife has known about my struggle for a little over two weeks now (ask your LSP (local sober person) before making any rash decisions) which has definitely added a crazy twist to my journey. A crucial skill I have learned that I need to practice is utilizing the midah of emes. I need to learn to be open and honest with my wife. I have been living a life of secrecy and deception for the first two years of our marriage (thank G-d its only been two and not longer). I had a thought today that made me realize how helpful honesty can be for me (besides for how important it is for our relationship). I used to be a smoker; I would smoke about a pack a day, sometimes more. When I started dating I stopped. When the subject came up on a date I was completely truthful with my soon-to-be wife about my past smoking and that although quitting is a struggle, I would do my best to let her know if I ever slipped. Until I quit when my wife was expecting with our first child, my wife knew of every single cigarette I smoked while we were married. Although she didn't like it, it made it easier for her to deal with. She was able to give me the space I needed to work on quitting. When the time came I was able to do it. I am convinced that had I been secretly smoking I would not have been able to stop. So maybe being open and honest with her will help me stay clean. I don't know if this makes any sense... if not, someone please correct me.

Anyway, good Shabbos!

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Re: with Hashem's help

Posted by gibbor120 - 17 Aug 2013 00:43

Makes lots of sense. But I wouldn't take the smoking analogy to the same extreme. I don't think it's wise to tell your wife every time you fail at shmiras aynayim. Gotta go. Have a great Shabbos!

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Re: with Hashem's help

Posted by ahavas hashem - 18 Aug 2013 05:40

I agree with you on that, Gibor. That would just make her miserable. But honesty about the topic in general and, of course, letting her know if I act out is important.

Today is day 24!

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Re: with Hashem's help

Posted by ahavas hashem - 21 Aug 2013 04:26

Today is my 27th day clean.

It's funny how after only a few short weeks I already can start feeling full of myself. I feel very optimistic and confident that I'm in control of my masturbation problem. I know that this is not a good thing, but it's difficult to get these thoughts out of my head and change how I feel. I have made a lot of progress in the last month; probably more so than I have in the entire history of my problem. So the big question is: how do I acknowledge that I am growing and changing while still remaining humble and focused on recovery? (Maybe the question is the answer!) I just don't want to fall into the same trap lots of people seem to fall into- getting overconfident and falling.... Food for thought.

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Re: with Hashem's help

Posted by skeptical - 21 Aug 2013 04:35

Be aware that there is always the potential to fall.

Don't dwell on the thought but just beware.

We don't usually outgrow the desire, it is merely asleep and can be awakened at any moment.

Continue to thank Hashem for helping you stay clean!

Hatzlacha!

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Re: with Hashem's help

Posted by Pidaini - 21 Aug 2013 14:32

I have found that genuinely thanking Hashem helps alot. Look back at the day, see how many times you could've should've had a fall or slip, and appreciate the fact that He has given yet another clean day.

It humbles and gives us strength to continue.

KOT

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Re: with Hashem's help

Posted by Dov - 21 Aug 2013 15:07

When the slap-down nature gives us comes, it is usually pitiless and brutal. It's just a matter of

time, beH. But what will we do then?

It eventually becomes clear to a bar deyah that his feelings and character are not to be relied upon, period.

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Re: with Hashem's help

Posted by Dr.Watson - 21 Aug 2013 15:23

I just want to share something that Duvid Chaim said yesterday on the conference that I really liked:

"Why is it that I'm in control of every area of my life except this one struggle that I can't control myself?

Because if not for this one area that forces me to rely on G-d, I would think that I was G-d!"

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Re: with Hashem's help

Posted by ahavas hashem - 22 Aug 2013 05:34

Today I'm 28 days clean! I can't believe its been four weeks already! I am so happy that I made it to this point. I am even happier that about the fact that this is the first time in my life that I'm not holding my breath.

To all my wonderful friends, than you so much for your thoughts and suggestions. I think your all right. I need to start thanking Hashem a lot more. I guess my attitude needs to change. Until now I have actually been trying to leave Hashem out of this. Just talking to Hashem and asking Him to help me with this has obviously not been helpful in the past so I was busy trying to stay practical and focusing on what I need to do instead of focusing on Hashem. I was telling myself to stay clean for practical, every-day reasons instead of religious, spiritual reasons. I found this to work quite well. I discovered that I am more motivated if I have what to practically gain. This philosophy may still hold true, but it wouldn't hurt to thank Hashem after the fact for all the incredible hashgecha pratis I have witness that led me to the real beginning and continuation of

my recovery.

That being said, thank you Hashem for four clean weeks. Thank you Hashem for guiding me to this site which led me to Dov which led to his phone group. These four weeks would not have happened if not for these three crucial things along with a million other things. Thanks!

[Dov wrote:](#)

When the slap-down nature gives us comes, it is usually pitiless and brutal. It's just a matter of time, beH. But what will we do then?

It eventually becomes clear to a bar deyah that his feelings and character are not to be relied upon, period.

Dov- What exactly are you saying? (Sometimes I need things spelled out.) Do you mean to say that I should forget about my feelings, put them on the side and focus on the reality that I'm a masturbater who can't control himself? That I can't be trusted and that I need to keep doing things to make sure I stay sober?

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Re: with Hashem's help

Posted by Dov - 22 Aug 2013 06:17

I was just commenting on the ideas you brought out and wanted to share that for me, there is no real trust of myself. As the ba'al Shem Tov pointed out in his episode with the old water carrier, "what a difference a day makes!" and showed how we are *judged* anew each day, in just that way.

So our feelings make reality what it appears to be. Gevalt! You hear the limitation this puts on us as accurate judges of reality - of the Goodness or Badness of any given day? To me, that means that my routine os very precious, and whether I wake up on the right or wrong side of the bed, I am a Jew and have davening, a husband and my wife does not deserve a long face or a

faking and secret husband, and have a job, so gotta do my duties well, and kids when i get home so they deserve a good father. All these things help me STOP - and get help by opening up to a program friend and to my G-d about the whats going on with me right now and let go of my chains - before things go downhill and I end up bitter and self-absorbed in my religiosity or self-piteous sadness. All that'd just be **pride** in disguise! For it is true humility when I admit my limitations and need for help and end up choosing hachno'oh by letting go of what my childish heart is *demanding* with familiar, stamping feet: the luxury of self-pity saying, "To hell with everyone else....what about **me**?! This stinks!" My feelings are just that: feelings, not reality, and are no good *judge* of what's really going on with my life.

Sorry for rambling again...

So it is a bit 'severe' for me to say you 'should' do this, or 'should' feel that, but yeah, it is great for me to remember that I am really not a well man, and need G-d's help to stay sane and useful. Three or four weeks of success staying sober 'under the gun' as you know you are now, does not prove in the least that you are a new man and have mastered this (or anything).

But you are a new man in many respects, and a rare sober person - under ANY circumstances! So continued hatzlocha to you!!

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Re: with Hashem's help

Posted by ahavas hashem - 29 Aug 2013 16:48

I'm back. Sorry about that week off. My computer wasn't working for a few days and the past few days I haven't been pushing myself to come back on and post. I've been thinking a lot over the last few weeks about Dov's last post. What a reality shock for me! It's so true that "the truth hurts". It hit me so hard how so out of touch I am with my own reality (and I don't pretend to be in touch with it now just because of one insight I had). I let a few weeks of sobriety get to my head and forgot who I really am- a selfish, sick person. For example, I was all proud of myself that I've been clean now for over a month, thank G-d, but after really trying to look past the fluff I realized that the only thing that is stopping me from masturbating is that I don't want to have to tell my wife that I acted out. So I'm really not a big tzadik for staying clean because the motivation is totally selfish- I don't care about being clean to be clean, I just don't want to have to deal with my wife. I understand nothing about my problem and how to deal with it. Like Dov said, these feeling are nothing, they just warp our sense of reality and make us tune out what is real. Feelings are just feelings, nothing more. I need to stick to the facts and keep working on recovery.

In other news, thank G-d I completed my 35th clean day yesterday! I can't remember being clean this long in the last three years. This is truly an accomplishment. Thank you Hashem for paving a path for me and pointing me in all the right directions. I beg that You continue to guide my wife and I as we both continue to recover.

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Re: with Hashem's help

Posted by ahavas hashem - 30 Aug 2013 15:43

Yesterday was my 36th clean day. I hope to get another update in before Shabbos... we'll see.

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Re: with Hashem's help

Posted by gibbor120 - 31 Aug 2013 00:06

[ahavas hashem wrote:](#)

Thank you Hashem for paving a path for me and pointing me in all the right directions. I beg that You continue to guide my wife and I as we both continue to recover.
Amen!

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