

(trying to) Keep Smiling - Log

Posted by smiley1900 - 12 Sep 2013 08:17

Hi everybody!

While in the process of "fixing" myself in other areas of my life and in the spirit of the new year and aseres yemei teshuva, I'm going to take a shot at the 90 day chart.

In my intro

(guardyoureyes.com/forum/19-Introduce-Yourself/218879-Re-%28trying-to%29-Keep-Smiling) I claim that I am not "addicted" but (wrongly, yet) willingly using inappropriate behavior as a form of stress relief. So, in addition to being a tool for stopping this bad habit, it will also give some insight into the truth of that statement...

For me the biggest part of making this happen is finding healthy ways of stress relief. I find meaningful communication to be a tremendous stress reliever, so, you'll probably be hearing

I've been involved in the process of breaking bad habits recently so I am confident (as opposed to over-confident) in the chances of success.

Wish me luck!

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Re: (trying to) Keep Smiling - Log

Posted by smiley1900 - 17 Sep 2013 08:03

I've been so busy the last 2 days that I thought my name would be red on the chart for a lack of update... But, b"h, things are going well. I've been focusing a lot on meaningful communication and I've found that I just can't get enough of it, almost all casual conversation makes me bored, I can see people going meshuga from me. B"H for this forum where there is enough meaningful conversation to stay busy 24/6. I'm still pretty sure that my addiction is not to p or m but to meaningful connection, because as long as I have that, other thoughts don't even begin to enter my mind. I guess this is what it says that the head is like the pit Yosef was thrown in to by his brothers; on which the posuk says "vehabor reik ein bo mayim" and rashi explains that the extra

words "ein bo mayim" teach us that there were snakes and scorpions there, so too the head when it is not occupied, it gets full of "snakes and scorpions"...

I've also been "floating around" a lot over the last few days, not been very productive at work, so perhaps I am suffering from the fantasy of my newfound GYE "addiction", (I am very comfortable with the term in this context, I think I do have an addiction to meaningful communication and connection, although from a philosophical point of view, this addiction makes a lot less sense than a S addiction). Either way, b"h it's going well and (ka"h, poo, poo, poo) bez"h will continue to go well.

All the best! Chazak to you all!

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Re: (trying to) Keep Smiling - Log
Posted by smiley1900 - 17 Sep 2013 17:47

Dear YH of Depression,

I'm too depressed to try to make you happy today... (Idiot!)

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Re: (trying to) Keep Smiling - Log
Posted by smiley1900 - 17 Sep 2013 18:12

Dear YH of Desire,

I know this game you have going with YH of Depression, but I am not a ping-pong ball! Ping-pong is not even a sport... go get a life, both of you! I'm too busy for your stupid games!

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Re: (trying to) Keep Smiling - Log
Posted by smiley1900 - 17 Sep 2013 19:17

Dear YH of Defensiveness,

Keep my coworkers out of this!

So many yetzer horo's in one day!... Ah, I know, I'm still debating whether or not to build a sukah or be lazy and treat my family like beggars like every year.

Dear YH of Laziness,

The debate is over! I'm building a sukah! Suck it, loser! (Yeah, I know it's "geera b'eina", but you can't win a war without a gun...)

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Re: (trying to) Keep Smiling - Log
Posted by Dr.Watson - 17 Sep 2013 19:58

not so. "heim boim benitzchono shel bosor vodom, onu boim benitzchono shel mokom"

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Re: (trying to) Keep Smiling - Log
Posted by smiley1900 - 17 Sep 2013 20:06

Dear YH's of Pride and Holiness,

No! I will not spend all day running around like a lunatic trying to build the sukah of my dreams

even though you think it's more mehudar. I'm gonna just go and get a sukah like everybody else.

And YH's of Stinginess and Realisticness you know I don't care for you much in general and am not bothered by how much it's gonna cost and if I can afford it...

Anybody else I didn't notice? Come out of your hiding place, I'm looking out for you...

Wow, so many YH's in one morning! Phew... Imagine walking around with all these YH's banging in my head all day, no wonder I'm so stressed out...

Thank you GYE people for helping me carry this heavy burden!

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Re: (trying to) Keep Smiling - Log
Posted by smiley1900 - 17 Sep 2013 20:11

[Dr.Watson wrote:](#)

not so. "heim boim benitzchono shel bosor vodom, onu boim benitzchono shel mokom"

Interesting thought, I have to think about how that applies here.

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Re: (trying to) Keep Smiling - Log
Posted by smiley1900 - 17 Sep 2013 20:45

[smiley1900 wrote:](#)

[Dr. Watson wrote:](#)

not so. "heim boim benitzchono shel bosor vodom, onu boim benitzchono shel mokom"

Interesting thought, I have to think about how that applies here.

Of course! It applies in the exact same way it does in the literal sense, the posuk is not suggesting that we fight a war without ammunition, the posuk is saying that while the goyim think the ammunition is what wins the war, we know that the ammunition is just a tool and it's effectiveness is in the hands of hashem. The trick is to make sure we don't get too carried away with the tools that we forget about hashem...

Thanks for the reminder!

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Re: (trying to) Keep Smiling - Log

Posted by smiley1900 - 18 Sep 2013 20:25

Today is day 8 of my journey (which apparently is some sort of milestone) and it's time to take stock and see where I've been and what has happened in this time. Here it goes.

Why did I come here in the first place? What was I trying to accomplish with coming here?

While the answer to these questions may seem obvious to most of you, it turns out that as opposed to most others on this forum, dealing with the problem of acting out is not the first step in my journey of resolving life issues, in fact my other life issues affect me so deeply that I believe this problem is really only a symptom of the other life issues (those issues are explained at length [here](#)), I am trying to prove this to be true with my approach to recovery, so far so good (more about this below), and I believe very strongly that this is true about most people that are here, (my view on this matter is discussed more at length [here](#), and iy"h more coming soon...). Nevertheless, despite the fact that my "core" life issues are not completely resolved, and (at the time) I felt that focusing on the symptoms is a diversion of resources in the wrong direction, I came here for the following reasons:

- I reached a point in resolving my core life issues in which the next step required just waiting, and I hate waiting! So I decided to start tackling some of the symptoms of my problem to "pass the time".
- My life issues were causing me tremendous suffering to which I couldn't find relief, and I thought that this place sounds like a good place for me, because even if it doesn't provide a cure for the cause of the suffering it provides a "shoulder to lean on" and sympathy/empathy, which can do wonders.
- I thought that dealing with this "symptom" might provide additional insight into some of my core life issues, maybe providing the key that would eventually lead to successful resolution to those issues.

Am I still here for the same reasons? If not, how so and why? Is coming here succeeding in addressing my original or revised goals?

The answer is yes and no. I am still here for the same reasons, but a lot has changed and many new perspectives have come about as a result of being here, plus some new goals:

- Besides being a useful way of "passing time", I've learned that there is a lot more value to tackling symptoms than that (this is a whole torah in itself and is discussed in other places on this forum, including the "core issues" thread referenced above), and I am more enthusiastic about it than I was when I first came here.
- While I still suffer from inner conflict and turmoil ("dear YH..."), the atmosphere here is amazingly supportive and as a result, besides being a "shoulder to lean on" which reduces my suffering tremendously, it has become a critical part of resolving my core issues, because it provides for me a safe and warm environment, plus lots of new perspectives and stimulation which are critical tools for me while dealing with my core and symptomatic issues.
- Dealing with this symptom did not provide any additional insight into the root of the problem, but has given me tremendous insight and perspective into life in general and into new ways to look at resolving life issues (see previous point).
- In addition to my original goals, I now have an additional goal, which I didn't think I was ready for, and that is the goal which brings most people here, i.e. to be a better Jew and strengthen my connection to hashem. The tayere yiden here who are determined despite all odds to put their issues and reservations aside and work tirelessly to reach this goal at all cost are an inspiration. B"H, this goal is being addressed here as well (using a method that I believe works best for me, despite claims of the failures of this approach), and as an added benefit I am learning new and very useful things about myself and my processes.

So, now that I know why I came here and why I am here now, how am I doing? Am I getting anywhere? What are my plans for the future?

As far as the goal that everybody is here for, i.e. refraining from acting out, I think I am doing a tremendous job, because not only have I not acted out, I haven't even "acted out" in my thoughts, and that is not because these thoughts have not come to mind, but because as soon as they do I am anticipating them and subdue them either by diverting attention, there is no limit to the opportunities for that (and it's always the best option for dealing with the YH, why get your hands dirty?), or if that doesn't work by reaching out and posting here ("dear YH...") which has the "tashlich" effect of getting these thoughts out of my head and "throwing" them away (is this the same concept of "letting go" that is talked about in connection to addiction? either way, it works for me, for now).

I believe the main reasons for this success is because I am using the proactive as opposed to reactive approach and because I am using the perspective of looking at this problem in context of the bigger picture, I am constantly evaluating myself and my state of mind, I am constantly on the lookout for triggers, and I am constantly trying to "dig" deeper and deeper to get a better understanding of myself and of the root of my problem(s), the deeper I dig the more I find and the more effective the tools (or weapons, you should see what's going on [here](#)) I use become.

The method I am using in reaching this goal, is not only successful for this goal, and the other goals I hoped to accomplish by coming here, it is successful in many other goals I have in life, both problem resolution goals and building the future goals, and is proving to be a life enhancer in general. For this I will forever be grateful to the organizers, managers and you the participants of this great effort for the tools, support and inspiration I have found here which enhanced my life in many ways I never imagined it will.

As for future plans, I believe human beings are like bicycles, as soon as we stop moving we fall, and as long as we are going uphill we need to pedal in order to keep moving. How fast and how hard we need to pedal depends on how steep the hill is, what gear we're on and how strong our legs are. Right now I am on a steep hill and the pedaling is hard and intense, I look forward to a bit more leveled ground but I know that the only way to reach the top is by going upwards (listen to "keep climbing" from Avraham Fried, nice song), and that as soon as I reach the top of the hill, there is another hill to climb and then another and another... If I don't keep moving I will definitely fall and the YH is in hot pursuit, I will always be on the lookout, keep evaluating, keep "digging" (or is it climbing?), and most importantly keep reaching out, until the end of days, hopefully with the coming of moshiach (it says somewhere that when moshiach comes hashem is going to shecht the YH, I am reserving front row seats!).

B"H, I built my sukah and got my arba minim, I am tired from all this emotional drama from the past few days, but I've already seen burnout, and yet here I am, because for me burnout is not an option...

This "status update" turned into a full fledged article... Oh, well. Now I have to go to the "having fun" forum to wind down a little...

I hope this article is as useful to you in clarifying things as it is for me. Good Y"T to you all, and keep climbing!

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Re: (trying to) Keep Smiling - Log
Posted by smiley1900 - 23 Sep 2013 09:08

Gut moed.

Still going strong b"h. There is a lot of thought provoking (and fun) stuff going on here, I find it to be a tremendous resource. I know there's lots of material all over the site but I find the "lecture-style" learning method doesn't talk to me so well, I need more an interactive experience to really internalize the information I get, this forum is the perfect place for that learning style where the information comes out through interactive discussion and question/answer.

Anyways, here is (another) new idea I discovered through this forum, in two parts:

1. The idea that Torah and Mitzvos not only (almost always) do not help for fighting behavioral problems like addiction etc. (an idea I was made aware of a while ago), but can sometimes (almost always?) serve as fuel to sustain or even magnify the problem, and sometimes it can even become a trigger for the (creation? - not sure about that, or) continuation of the problem, thereby becoming a tool of self destruction instead of healing. Perhaps this is the concept of "zocho naase lo sam hachayim, lo zacha naase lo sam hamoves".
2. The idea that our good and "holy" thoughts and behaviors are based in our desire for self-pleasure and we just use the goodness and holiness aspect of that behavior to justify it, whether consciously or subconsciously, whether to ourselves or to others.

This idea is not fully confirmed in my mind, because I still have to reconcile this idea with the idea of serving hashem with joy. I have to think about the difference between joy and self-pleasure, is there anything inherently different between the two or is it just the underlying intentions?

This 2 part idea is how I understand the concept commonly referred to here as "the nuclear reset button". I need to think about this and read a little more about these ideas. I've seen Dov write very passionately about this, I'll try to read a little more of what he wrote. Maybe I'll start a new thread to discuss.

In the meantime, gut moed to you all and keep strong!

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Re: (trying to) Keep Smiling - Log
Posted by smiley1900 - 23 Sep 2013 23:49

Dear YH of Routine,

Despite the fact that it's not fair when others create problems for you for their own benefit, you have no right to make me stress over it.

And YH of Stress, using intellectual argument as a forum of stress relief is not such a good idea and tends to annoy many people, I think that's enough for one day.

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Re: (trying to) Keep Smiling - Log
Posted by smiley1900 - 25 Sep 2013 11:45

Dear YH of Problem Solving,

I know you are trying to distract me so you can catch me while I'm off guard. Well I'm watching you...

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Re: (trying to) Keep Smiling - Log

Posted by smiley1900 - 02 Oct 2013 17:56

I'm in bed feeling rotten and sad, nobody can get me out of this kind of rut, only me, and me is not interested today... I'm so vulnerable right now, but I'll just stay here and not do anything I

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Re: (trying to) Keep Smiling - Log

Posted by smiley1900 - 03 Oct 2013 11:16

B"H made it through the day, thanks in no small part to a member of the forum who pm'd me ~~don't want to do until this goes away~~ right away, thanks again! I'm feeling much better now.

Apparently, these kind of episodes are growing pains, I guess I'll learn to appreciate them at some point, in the meantime I will try to learn whatever I can from this experience (lots of chasuna food can wreck havoc on a sleep deprived body...). What I did notice from this experience is how much I've changed even from just a few weeks ago, when an episode like this would have knocked me out for a week, this time I was actually able to identify many (yeah, there are many) of the components that lead to this "breakdown", and while I was overwhelmed almost the whole day and disappointed at the loss of productivity, b"h I didn't fall into despair and most importantly hashem helped and I hardly had to struggle with keeping my chart, I am very grateful and feel lucky, even a little proud of myself of how far I've come.

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