

15+ years of battle - The Final Battle that will lead to victory

Posted by Ykv_schwartz - 08 Feb 2009 21:10

I have been battling this menuval for over 15 years since the age of 16. For the first time in my life I have a social network to reach out to and connect. I have made many attempts to breaking this terrible habit. But I will now once start from over again with what I hope will be the final battle that will ultimately lead to victory. Anyone reading this who feels moved or has encouraging words or words of advice, please share them with me. It will give me chizuk to know that I can give chizuk to others. It gives me chizuk knowing that others want me to succeed and want to give me chizuk. So please do not refrain from even the smallest comment. You never know how far your words can reach.

I have been clean now since Feb 4. I spent last night (Feb 6, motzai shabbos) and today in intense teshuva. For the first time in a long time, I felt the signs from Shamayim that I will be accepted back again. I was so encouraged by these signs it made me focus more on how to continue to work on myself to rid myself completely.

Here is my declaration of Teshuva(based on chovos Halevavos)

Today I am doing Teshuva for the terrible sins of masturbation, spilling seed, gazing at inappropriate material, and all other related sins. I realize full well that I have done these terrible acts. These acts are disgusting and despicable in the eyes of Hashem. Hashem despises them being done. They taint the body and soul.

Great Punishment awaits me for violating these prohibitions; I am afraid of your judgement. And although Hashem has not already meted out retribution for my sins, my sins are still preserved in the book of iniquities; nothing is forgotten from Hashem. I should not think that the reason I have not been punished already is because Hashem let this one slide. On the contrary, He know full well of my deeds but delays retribution to give me a chance to do Teshuvah. This is done out of the the great Chesed of Hashem. For according to the attribute of justice, I deserve to be punished immediately. But, Hashem in his great and infinite chesed gave me a chance to do Teshuvah. I thank you Hashem for granting m such privileges, for creating the concept of Teshuvah. I CAN FIX MY WRONGDOINGS!!!!

But not only this Kindness do you do for me but countless amount of kindness do you shower upon me. But in return for your graciousness I rebelled against you, while in fact I should be praising, thanking and be pleasing in your eyes.

Woe to me for committing these Sins. For instead of receiving great reward in this world and the next I am receiving just a minute and temporal amount of pleasure for my sins. And although I received at least this little amount of pleasure, I will be receiving great amounts of pain due to the punishment in this world and the next.

I, Therefore, take upon myself to remove myself from these sins and return to you Hashem. And although, I realize from the beginning that this will not be easy and I will have to face tough battles with the Yetzer Harah, I am willing to fight and I will never ever give up, no-matter what happens, and I am confident that I will win.

And I end with a plea to you, Hashem. For I realize that without your help I am unable to properly do Teshuvah. I therefore ask of you that now that I have pierced a hole the size of a needlepoint, you widen it like the opening of the Ulam.

May we all be Zoche to Teshuva Shleima

-ykv

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Re: 15+ years of battle - The Final Battle that will lead to victory
Posted by mevakesh - 09 Feb 2009 15:14

Hi Ykv,

Thank you for posting this beautiful declaration of *teshuvah*. It is very inspiring indeed.

I still need to reply to you more fully regarding your post on the main thread, but I cannot understate the importance of having some sort of accountability. It is certainly a good thing that you have the filter and am sure it helps immensely, but I have found that there is nothing like

accountability.

Rashi says in the very beginning of *parsas kedoshim* that the phrase *kedoshim tehiyu* is a declarative statement telling us that we should make *gedarim l'arayos*. *Rashi* continues to state that anytime you institute *gedarim l'arayos*, you find *kedusha*.

I am aware of *poskim* that rule that a person that has access to open Internet in the confines of a private environment is *oiver* the *issur* of *yichud*.

You mentioned that you have a filter, but it is easy enough for you to type keywords into Google to see what comes up. Filters are not perfect, even if they cannot be circumvented. The very fact that you may be sitting in front of the computer punching bad keywords into Google to see what comes up, in and of itself is is not a good place to be.

Accountability takes that all away because whatever you are doing before you get to those forbidden images are recorded as well.

I have 2 pieces of software that I use for accountability.

1) Spectorsoft Pro - records keystrokes, websites visited, application usage etc. etc. ... and takes screen shots every 30 seconds. The problem w/ this software is that it cannot be accessed remotely.

2) Spectorsoft e-blaster - records keystrokes, app. usage, takes periodic screen shots etc. and sends information to remote server to be viewed by my accountability partner. This program will also block pre-defined websites. I have e-blaster block youtube and any other gateway sites.

I am fortunate to have a close friend that I can do this with.

Perhaps some sort of accountability can plug that last hole for you as well?

Welcome to the boards!

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Re: 15+ years of battle - The Final Battle that will lead to victory

Posted by Ykv_schwartz - 09 Feb 2009 19:40

Day five and I feel great!

Shomer,

Thank you so much. I love hearing every ounce of encouraging words. Regarding your advice for accountability, something really amazing happened last night. But before I tell you what happened, I need to give you and everyone reading this a bit of interesting history. Like my title puts it, I have been battling this problem for 15+ years, since the age of 16. I have had this problem since 10. I got married at age 21, and therefore have been married for 10 years now. Now three years into our marriage, my wife caught me. It was a challenging time in our marriage. I do not need to go into the details of how she caught as it is not necessary. What am I to say? So I admitted that as a youth I had this problem, but that I overcame it, and this is very short lived recent relapse (that was obviously not true. My addiction followed me through every aspect of my life). I explained to her that it was not about her but about me and a problem that I have. Now this was before that the concept of porn addiction was a known issue and it was very difficult for her to understand this. We went to a therapist who helped her understand and helped us through this time. B"H, our marriage was saved. What we did not do with the therapist was help ME. So after that whole event she made me promise to never do that again and said that if I ever get an urge I should talk to her about it. Well I did. The truth is that I was so shaken by the event that for six weeks I had absolutely no urges. Until one terrible sunday morning, she was out of the house and it started all over again. I was too ashamed to go back to her and admit that it was back (I should have), and the problem continued to grow again. Every once in a while she became suspicious (and rightfully so) and actually confronted me with it but each time I brushed it away. The good thing about all that was that now I felt comfortable speaking about this issue with her. However, when I would explain my 'past', I was really explaining my 'present'. This was a therapeutic way for me to discuss my emotions. What I was describing as my emotions from 15 years ago was actually my emotions from last night. The other good thing was that she was able to help encourage me on some of my fences. Like, no going to any mall. It is known that in these places there is lots of pritzus. And we agreed together that I do not belong there. This made it very easy for me.

Now for last night. In a crazy event of siyata d'shmaya, my filter broke down yesterday and instead of giving me free access to the internet, I was completely blocked. It was very frustrating because I had lots of work to do. I used my wife's computer to do some stuff (like post here) but without my computer I was crippled. So my wife said that maybe we need a new filter. So I told her the problem with the other filters is that you can turn them off with a password, and the one that I have it is impossible to access porn sites. I then continued, but maybe YOU want to take the password and not tell me. She found that funny, but I said this could be very serious. I then went on to tell her about the concept of accountability and asked her if she can be my official partner. Realizing the potential danger for me with a computer she figured why not. Now, I think that this help me doubly. Knowing that my own wife can be looking over me, and the one that can assist me into total recovery is special indeed. Now had she not know about this problem that I have, she would probably be a bit wierded out about this. But because she knows that I fell once, she now understands the potential problem

Now, I just have to get the proper software. I will look into the various options that you mentioned and others and figure what will work best for me.

-ykv

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Re: 15+ years of battle - The Final Battle that will lead to victory
Posted by battleworn - 09 Feb 2009 20:01

Ykv, I'm very inspired by your declaration of teshuva. You really are heading in the right direction and I'm sure you'll succeed! But I just want to point out one small point.

You wrote:

I, Therefore, take upon myself to remove myself from these sins and return to you Hashem. And although, I realize from the beginning that this will not be an easy and I will have to face tough battles with the Yetzer Harah, I am willing to fight and confident that I will win.

That's all right on the mark, but I think you need to add that you take upon yourself to never ever give up, no-matter what happens. I sincerely hope that you will never even be tempted to give up and I think there's a very good chance that that will be the case. But it's crucial to make it very clear from the beginning, that you will never ever give up!

I wish you tremendous hatzlochoh, and you should be zocheh to teshuva shleima mitoch simcha!

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Re: 15+ years of battle - The Final Battle that will lead to victory
Posted by the.guard - 09 Feb 2009 20:10

Yakov, we're honored to have you here with us. Please see the filter section of our site for many good options and advice.

www.guardureyes.com/GUE/Filters/filters.asp

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Re: 15+ years of battle - The Final Battle that will lead to victory
Posted by Ykv_schwartz - 10 Feb 2009 20:41

Day 6 and feeling great.

Thank you very much guys for the chizuk. batteworn, I added in an extra line to my declaration with your advice.

During these past few days, I added extra things to my daily routine to help me along this teshuva process:

1. [12 Torah steps](#): Each day I devote to a new step. I read over the step in the morning a few times. And then during the day I repeat and think about the day's step. I start step 5 tomorrow.
2. tikkun clali : I decided to devote each day to another perek of the tikun clali. I figured doing it all on one day would tire me out. This way I spend 10-15 minutes concentrating on one perek of tehillim, I make sure that I understand it, absorb it, and read it over and over again.

3. Shma - I make sure that I put extra kavana in the first line of shma, as we know this is kabalas ol malchus shamayim.

4. extra mussar - I added an extra short mussar seder to focus on internal change.

-ykv

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Re: 15+ years of battle - The Final Battle that will lead to victory
Posted by Ykv_schwartz - 11 Feb 2009 18:29

Day 7 and feeling great!

-ykv

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Re: 15+ years of battle - The Final Battle that will lead to victory
Posted by the.guard - 11 Feb 2009 18:32

Welcome to the club of the world's greatest warriors in Shmiras Habris. You are joining the Tzadikim like Ano, BeHoly, Battleworn, Shomer, Mevakesh, and the list goes on and on...

Just the other day I saw a line from the Magid of Mezritch (Ohr Torah, Parshas Beshalach). To paraphrase: "The tzadik is the foundation of the world and all the world must bend to his will. And who is the tzadik? Anyone who is Shomer HaBris."

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Re: 15+ years of battle - The Final Battle that will lead to victory
Posted by Ykv_schwartz - 11 Feb 2009 19:49

Guard,

Wow! That's amazing! thanks

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Re: 15+ years of battle - The Final Battle that will lead to victory

Posted by be holy - 12 Feb 2009 07:08

you have such strength and determination. you have taken hashems gifts and are using them to be mikadesh yourself. you are an inspiration to all of us. keep up the good work!! you already have a fan club.

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Re: 15+ years of battle - The Final Battle that will lead to victory

Posted by Ykv_schwartz - 12 Feb 2009 18:28

Day 8 and feeling great!

I have been keeping up my extra additions to daily routines:

Today was step 6. Step 6 is a declaration of *Azivas Hachet*. We took upon ourselves to immerse in a purifying mikvah as often as we could, and to stop gazing at women, or pictures of women, whether on the Internet, on TV or the movies, in magazines or in the street. I made sure to put extra kavana in this.

Another addition that I do is add an extra tefilla in my shemone esrei to ask Hashem "prevent me and all my friends from the forum from having such string urges and if **WE** get these urges to please help **US** fight them". I feel it is important to daven for other people not only for myself.

Thanks for the encouragement from all my "fans".

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Re: 15+ years of battle - The Final Battle that will lead to victory

Posted by the.guard - 12 Feb 2009 19:31

Indeed! It says in the Gemara (Baba Kama 92 or somewhere around there): ***"Who ever davens for his friend and he needs the same thing, he will be answered first!"***

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Re: 15+ years of battle - The Final Battle that will lead to victory

Posted by Ykv_schwartz - 13 Feb 2009 08:23

Today is Erev Shabbos. I am so excited! Why? because shabbos is coming. So? Because this is the time since my initial relapse three months ago that I was able to go an entire week clean. Still, what is all the excitement? The excitement is not because I am reflecting on the past week of my great accomplishment and milestone. Rather, I am anticipating the future. Shabbos, as we know, is a time we can get close to Hashem and Love him. There have been shabbosim that I was quite embarrassed to great shabbos enveloped in filth. I obviously did it anyways. I still davened, said kiddush, zmiros. But with regret. But this week I look forward to a pure shabbos. A shabbos where I know Hashem will be happy to see me. A shabbos where I can really express my yearn to get close with him and my feeling of love for him. A shabbos where I feel that it is valid to express my love for him. A shabbos that I hope He will tap me on my shoulder and say to me with a glowing smile, "I knew you could it, my son. I knew you could do it. Keep up the good work!".

May we all be zoche to remove ourselves from aveiros, get close to Hashem and live in eternal communion and pleasure with Him.

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Re: 15+ years of battle - The Final Battle that will lead to victory

Posted by Binyomin5766 - 13 Feb 2009 14:28

Ykv, I understand a little how you feel. Going into erev Shabbos was always a relief to me from shortly after I starting becoming observant (a little over four years ago). Even in the worst times of rolling in the mud of p'gam habris, Shabbos was the one day I was almost guarenteed to remain clean. So for me, even as I approach the completion of eight clean weeks, there is a sense of relief as Shabbos arrives. Not only do I leave work behind for a day, I am able to leave my most difficult struggle behind as well. The last time I fell was a moetzei Shabbos, so I count my days from the morning of the first day of a week, the morning of erev Channukah as it happens. So I also have a strong sense that Shabbos is preparing me for something new, a

new week to grow in kedusha.

Have a good Shabbos.

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Re: 15+ years of battle - The Final Battle that will lead to victory
Posted by mevakesh - 13 Feb 2009 14:49

Ykv ... have a wonderful Shabbos!

Great work this week ...

Any news on the filter?

B'Hatzlacha

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