

Road to 90 days (how I succeeded, and you can too)
Posted by Yosef Tikun HaYesod - 17 Nov 2016 07:53

I don't understand how being here is going to help.

Perhaps posting my progress and struggles will help other people.

Perhaps I'll receive encouragement and good advice and support.

I sincerely DOUBT that I can just succeed for 90 days (13 weeks),
just because I decide I want to, SINCE I've failed so many times
in the past. But maybe this time is different, because I will post here,
and have 2 experienced guys I've been emailing regularly.

B'ezras HaShem, I will finally succeed and break free from this bad habit.

=====
=====

Re: going for 90 days (Feb. 20)
Posted by Markz - 11 Dec 2016 23:08

[Watson wrote on 11 Dec 2016 23:06:](#)

Please do continue posting. I will daven that you should be successful.

Please have us all in mind

by the Watson wall

=====
=====

Re: going for 90 days (Feb. 20)
Posted by Yosef Tikun HaYesod - 12 Dec 2016 13:12

Lev, 32 days clean (so far).

I think I have a few open questions and/or requests for clarification that are still on the table.

And I am more than happy to clear up anything by email.

I was strongly advised by Dovid (my support buddy) to go for Cold Turkey take 3.

I've got to break the bad habit. And not feeding it (taking off all streaming videos) seems to be the best way...and a crucial step. So, here it goes, Cold Turkey take 3!

Hopefully, this time it will stick, or better said, I will stick to it.

I spent hours going over and writing down what I feel are the main points of The Fight part 3.

Of course, I did it for myself, but since I think that what Rabbi Shafier says may very well help others, I am posting it here for anyone who wants to read it:

HaShem wants us to succeed.

Marriage is the basis of the family.

HaShem wants marriages to work.

And He created all the forces need to accomplish just that.

Take these two utter strangers, with completely different natures.

Tell them to now spend the rest of their lives together in peace, harmony and love. How does it work?

To help bridge the gap, HaShem created various forces to allow a man and woman to form a bond. One of those forces is physical intimacy. The act of a man living with his wife causes a bonding and an attachment. Much like we find in the wild that certain species mate one time and are pair bonds for life.

The physical act has the power to create a bond. I heard my Rebbe use this expression "making love" many times, and was a little embarrassed. But it comes out that the expression "making love" is actually an apt, and accurate term. The act brings to love. Hashem created the very nature of man to desire to cling to his wife. Not only does he have a desire to be with her physically, but much more. Hashem created this need and the ability to feel a bonding and sense of attachment to his wife. The problem is the times that we are living in. The "blade got dulled". By the time you got married, you already had seen so many women. You already had

desired so many women, that the mechanism got dulled.

The answer according to the Sefer HaChinuch is that: you need to train yourself to look at your wife and say: that is how a woman talks, that is how a woman walks. Anything else is strange. The goal is to train myself to have eyes for my wife only, to only be attracted to my wife, to only have an interest in my wife, to only have a desire for my wife. In certain cultures, fat women were considered desirable.

It seems that much of the male attraction to particular looks in women is culturally based. In the ancient Greek times, big and voluptuous women were considered the ideal. Being fat was a sign of health and wealth. But because the culture we live in views fat as ugly, it changes our view of beauty. Desire is natural, but what we desire is learned. Torah wants a man to be happily married. This is the system - imprinting your mind and training yourself, this is a woman. Nothing else is a woman. Everything else is foreign and strange. The behamah side of me is attracted to that which it has been taught is desirable. If the culture that a man is in thinks, "thin is in", then he will find that attractive. If the culture that he is in considers tanned skin to be ugly, then he won't be attracted to tanned women. If the culture that he is in considers large women to be unattractive, then he won't be attracted to that. He won't find it desirable.

If he is brought up with the notion that slanty eyes are the most beautiful things in the world, then he will most likely consider that normal. That is what a woman looks like, and he will be attracted to that. Desire is not evil or bad. It has its role and is very significant and important. The idea is to see your wife, and only your wife, as a woman. Every time that a man looks at another woman with hunger, he is training himself that his wife is not the only one for him. Quite the opposite, he is training himself to have eyes for other women. To review: 1. you have to work not just on tayvah, but your overall ruchnius, 2. you have to work on Tayvah directly too, 3. don't learn how not to fall when you're drunk. Instead, learn not to get drunk. And now the fourth principle is that you can change the object of your desire. Take an image of your wife, and carry it in your brain. When an attractive woman comes along, pull out that image from your brain and say to yourself: mine is what I want. I'm not interested in someone else.

Mine will make me happy. Mine was given to me by HaShem.

You are training yourself to be satisfied with what you have, with what HaShem has given you. Become drunk with your wife. When you are physically together, use the passion to emblazon her image in your mind. Develop eyes only for your wife. You are reprogramming your brain. Take vacations together. Get into your wife. Spend time doing fun things together. Go to a romantic setting. As much as you can fall in love with your wife, do it. As much as you can fall in lust with your wife, do it. Hungering for her, desiring her, focusing all of your drive on her. It's important that you understand why HaShem made these forces and put them into man. They bring the couple together. They cause a bonding. They cause an attachment. These desires aren't evil. They have a very real place, and are essential for the success of a marriage.

Changing gears, there is a big difference between pleasure and passion. Pleasure is the

amount of enjoyment that you receive while doing an activity. Passion is the desire, the pull you have to that activity. That stale, old peanut butter sandwich was eaten with great passion, since you were starving and hadn't eaten for days, but it gave you very little pleasure. There are things that we desire that bring us little pleasure, and there are things that bring us great pleasure, that we don't instinctively desire. While the addict may have started out motivated by the pleasure he received from alcohol or drugs, the desire, craving, hunger, and urge has become so powerful that it controls him, even when the activity no longer brings him pleasure. Not only aren't addicts motivated by pleasure, they often find no enjoyment in it anymore. It leaves them empty and depressed, down and out — but they need it all the same. One of the biggest obstacles in working on tayvah is the mistake that it is pleasure that I'm pursuing.

Pleasure is the state or feeling of being pleased or gratified, a source of enjoyment or delight. Most people are not pleasure seekers, but are rather driven by tayvah. They are Behamas, ruled over by their desire and instincts like the animal kingdom. This means simply that you have a great pull to that activity. It grips you and gets hold of you. Out of control, tyvah will ruin your life. Like a dog in heat, all day long hungry, desirous, needing something that you can't have. You can't have every beautiful woman that walks down the street. Not every movie star and actress is going to agree to be with you. So it's not pleasure that you are pursuing. It's not enjoyable being hungry all day without the ability to eat.

HaShem wants you to be happy. HaShem is the giver and created the whole world to give. We were created for Olam Habah. But HaShem wants us to be happy here and now. When you love your wife and you work on being satisfied with her alone, then life is beautiful! If not, it's gehenom!

Being in heat isn't fun. It's being out of control. Just like being filled with hatred isn't fun and being filled with flaming anger isn't fun.

=====

Re: going for 90 days (Feb. 20)

Posted by Singularity - 12 Dec 2016 13:59

Good Luck! Well done on Lev Tahor!

Enjoy the turkey. I'm a Hurwitz Levi, we don't eat turkey! But I could do for a chicken mayo sandwich!

Life outside the lust bubble is revitalising. So why oh why do we keep falling into it!

Warning: Spoiler!

=====

Re: going for 90 days (Feb. 20)
Posted by Workingguy - 12 Dec 2016 14:29

Great recap of the shiur, thanks!

=====

Re: going for 90 days (Feb. 20)
Posted by Yosef Tikun HaYesod - 13 Dec 2016 14:45

I feel really stupid to have said that the nisayon gets easier with time
(even though I think it to be true) on some other thread (group 196).
Then, the yetzer hara gave me a pretty big test...and I actually had thoughts
of failing and giving in.

I still feel it could go either way, and that I am not out of the woods for sure yet today.

A little help/chizuk would be nice.

=====

Re: going for 90 days (Feb. 20)
Posted by Markz - 13 Dec 2016 14:50

Yosef, I love you bro

I think this is where much perspectives and introspection kicks us in the butt

Will chizuk get you sober, or just allow the white knuckling to continue?

Is that what you're looking for? It may work for some...

COT

Warning: Spoiler!

=====

Re: going for 90 days (Feb. 20)

Posted by Yosef Tikun HaYesod - 13 Dec 2016 15:09

Thanks for writing back so fast.

It helps to know someone is out there...

and caring.

I don't understand the end of your post.

How to get to monster trucking.

How to ask Gevurah anything.

Maybe you could say it differently?

p.s. I don't think I've been white knuckling it.

For some time now, I haven't felt such a desire to "act out".

But I think I was blasted (some spiritual karma thing) for saying it gets easier...

and not feeling someone else's pain or experience enough.

=====
=====

Re: going for 90 days (Feb. 20)

Posted by Yosef Tikun HaYesod - 13 Dec 2016 16:29

Markz, thanks again for helping me when I needed someone.

I am no longer in immediate danger, Boruch HaShem,

and have therefore updated my clean streak just now.

It's amazing and a little scary how close I got to losing all control

and acting out.

And I kind of feel great now that I passed the test...

and feel like celebrating. If I wasn't watching my weight and only

eating healthy, I would buy a chocolate cupcake/donut with lots of icing!

=====
=====

Re: going for 90 days (Feb. 20)

Posted by Shlomo24 - 13 Dec 2016 16:36

I don't think that it's ridiculous to say that it gets easier the longer one abstains. Especially if it's not an addiction.

Even from an addiction perspective, I find it easier to stay sober now. I have a program that works. But the emotional and spiritual part is where it gets tough. I cry much more frequently nowadays.

=====

Re: going for 90 days (Feb. 20)
Posted by Markz - 13 Dec 2016 17:22

[Yosef Tikun HaYesod wrote on 13 Dec 2016 16:29:](#)

Markz, thanks again for helping me when I needed someone.

I am no longer in immediate danger, Boruch HaShem,
and have therefore updated my clean streak just now.

It's amazing and a little scary how close I got to losing all control
and acting out.

And I kind of feel great now that I passed the test...
and feel like celebrating. If I wasn't watching my weight and only
eating healthy, I would buy a chocolate cupcake/donut with lots of icing!

If you want to get out of real danger the real way to celebrate is

KEEP CALM

AND CELEBRATE

WITH OTHERS

Call another guy like you / me in recovery

No pressure - or maybe you're Irish



=====

Re: going for 90 days (Feb. 20)
Posted by Yosef Tikun HaYesod - 13 Dec 2016 23:50

I came home with a gift for my wife.

A treat that I know she really likes.

I got 4 of them. And when she saw them, she said:

you got 1 for me and the rest for the kids?

I paused awhile to let it sink in, and said: no, I got them all for you.

HOMERUN, CUBS!

I mean, HOMERUN, me!

Between passing the nisayon and making my wife really happy,

I feel like a world series champion who just hit a homerun.

=====

Re: going for 90 days (Feb. 20)

Posted by Shlomo24 - 14 Dec 2016 00:09

Lol. I hope it tasted good.

(Now learn to take out the garbage).

=====

Re: going for 90 days (Feb. 20)

Posted by Singularity - 14 Dec 2016 07:43

Lol guys just LOL.

Yosef, remember, One Day at a Time. Also, pride and haughtiness increases with the clean streak. Heck, sometimes I wanted to act out just so that I would stop judging everyone else, and love every Jew for the true *tzadikim* they are! (See Dov on the Nuclear Reset Button).

But If we truly work on the idea that today's sobriety is completely independent of yesterday's sobriety, then we won't build up this *chometz* in our hearts that makes us want to be high and mighty and shun the little ones (ie everyone else). We can achieve a state of constant closeness to Hashem, constant nuclear reset button! That's right, constant dystopian future of nuclear war!

Well, no please G-d not the last bit.

But you get the picture.

Nice with the wife. I got her flowers then the next week I brought her a takeaway cappucino and something we have it's called "Chip n' Dip", and she said "Totally better than flowers!"

Gotta give what they want, not what you think!

=====

Re: going for 90 days (Feb. 20)
Posted by Yosef Tikun HaYesod - 14 Dec 2016 17:57

Another clean day.

Not a lot to say right now.

Can't say everything's good.

Lots of frustration.

But this area of tyvah has been good.

Similar to eating healthy (and losing weight).

These are 2 areas that I am taking control,

and have been successful today.

(and for the last little while now).

It actually makes me feel a little better, since other things

outside of my control or at least partially outside of my control

are largely frustrating me recently.

Someone misplaced something quite large, and I spent

10 frustrating minutes looking all over the house for it.

It was nowhere to be found. I got upset. Where did you last have it?

Who moved it? Where is it? It's too big to just disappear!

Then, the culprit figured out that he left it at someone else's house by mistake.

So, it truly was nowhere to be found!

Hopefully, this will be a kaparah...because it was quite upsetting at the time.

It may even be more of a kaparah if I don't get angry or raise my voice.

(something to keep in mind for next time...if there is a next time)

=====

=====