

being kind to myself

Posted by anequivalentpath - 25 Sep 2017 10:15

Hi,

After a nice week, I had a fall after the 3-day holiday. These are always hard for me...I don't deal well with crowds, and I've learned to avoid eating with strangers because I end up being too self-conscious. As a result I inevitably need to turn down invitations, and (a lot of the good) people are persistent, and it tends to be a trigger for me.

Amazingly I didn't act out over the holiday itself, but the morning of the fast I let myself slip all the way into the victimhood mindset.

b''h every day I am getting better and better at certain things (feeling normal in public, smiling for no reason) and I think there are concrete reasons

Wishing you well

AEP

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Re: being kind to myself

Posted by Hashem Help Me - 25 Sep 2017 11:00

Welcome. It should be with hatzlocha

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Re: being kind to myself

So here I am clean for one day again
Posted by gibbor120 - 26 Sep 2017 15:59

to have hope for myself...today at least

[anequivalentpath wrote on 25 Sep 2017 10:15:](#)

Hi,

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Working on dealing with crowds/self-consciousness itself will go a long way towards helping you. I wish you hatzlacha.

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Re: being kind to myself

Posted by dms1234 - 27 Sep 2017 00:49

I agree with Gibbor. In fact this has been my main focus. I constantly worry about what other people think about me. When i walk into a room, i wonder what people think about me. I make jokes so people will approve of me. I have learned through therapy, working the steps and my sponsors that this a lack of self esteem. I feel worthless so therefore i need to go out and fill that with approval from others.

In the past little while i have worked on replacing those feelings of worthlessness and seeking other peoples approval with accepting that God gives me my worth and that he loves me, cares for me, believes in me. I usually then take a nice relieving deep breath and enjoy the pleasant feeling of calm!

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Re: being kind to myself

Posted by anequivalentpath - 03 Oct 2017 06:21

I didn't expect to do a particularly good job with the yomim tom, and I was right. Compared to

the weeks before, my average rate of falls is better than it has been lately.

Thank you gibbor and dms for sharing how working on self-consciousness and self-worth might be an effective approach. I've been using a few different exercises given to me that seem to help. "Permission was given to the healer to heal"

I should mention -- in terms of self-worth -- is anyone familiar with meditation on the 72 names, whether there are solid sources behind it? It's one of the exercises this person gave me.

I know it's associated with *kriat yam suf*, so it makes sense when I read on the internet that it helps people to overcome the natural patterns of character.

I also know that *kriat yam suf* is associated with HaShem making known to us His love for us, so I thought it would be an appropriate meditation for working on self-worth/love...but I just don't know if any of it has solid rabbinic sourcing, so...

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Re: being kind to myself

Posted by nefeshpashut - 03 Oct 2017 10:47

I struggle greatly with the situations you describe. I have a big problem with people asking why I am not married when I am at these meals...can also lead to questions about how frum I am or whatever. Basically I feel like a loser/outsider and crave the comfort or false triumph of porn and/or sexual conquest. Funny enough, a colleague came on to patio to smoke cigarette where I was sitting after shul alone on YK (I am scholar living in research institute abroad). I was so tense, I whirled around and said, "I'm not weird, I'm Jewish!" All to explain my behavior of being alone and wearing hat! Yes being kind to myself was then very important. But seeing how silly it all was. I wanted the approval of this woman. I already had all the love I need from Hashem.

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Re: being kind to myself

Posted by anequivalentpath - 20 Apr 2018 10:52

It's been a while since the last post because for a while I wasn't focusing on this. It's so interesting that before I had been writing about working on self-consciousness in crowds, worrying about what the other thinks -- I think I have grown a little in these areas even if it is still a struggle. I know a little more about what I want and am a little more brazen in pursuing it, but it is hard sometimes to remove myself from groups or situations that feel undignified.

I had become involved with a Messianic chabad community. Friendly people, always willing to have me over for a meal. When yeshiva came back into session, I realized just how serious they were about the Rebbe being a prophet, prophesying himself as the messiah, and resurrecting some time soon to finish the job...wheeeew.

Thank G-d, these are not the only people in the area, and I know a little more how to make friends. (It's really easy in Israel.) I know how to let my guard down specifically around men in shul xD But there is always a little fear "maybe I'll feel lonely, maybe I'll fall", etc.

A person who likes to act very friendly kept inviting me to his house. I started to notice uncomfortable feelings of *shaychut* to his wife and did some rude things -- he invited me to join him for a shabbat meal and I couldn't say no to his face, so went but when he sat me down across from his wife I started acting like an idiot (face to the floor, not eating anything)...he (I guess on the principle of unconditional kindness) invited me again and it was again hard to say no, but this time instead of just going and making a fool of myself, I stayed home and didn't go to shul. (I think it's a far enough walk away that I'm not obligated to go) I know from experience just how quickly that discomfort can become closeness if it's released, and it is not something I wanted.

I just couldn't be honest with him and say no thanks, lest he pry. I am not sure if that's even the right approach. So I just disappeared.

I have invited to spend some time in a *chareidi* (not chabad) yeshiva, where I would have no access to a computer. It is in the middle of a college town. It seems like I'm between spending time in this or *TzaHaL* (unless I get some money) and I really don't know which option will be better for me in the area of *shleimut habrit*. Some of the girls around the yeshiva are not exactly modest or chaste...had a close brush with that fact on the bus the other night. (slipped a little but didn't fall).

I have decided to be careful about not looking women directly in the eyes. I had sat in the front of the bus, but a group of three girls came and claimed the seats all around me. I kept my eyes closed a lot of the time, but it was an unfamiliar route and I convinced myself to look out the window to see where I was whenever the bus stopped. I was dressed like a religious Jew and they decided to mess with me and gave me a difficult time.

(this triggered me and I don't recommend reading it unless you want to give some advice)

The girl across from me decided to mess with me (flirt). She gave me a look and made some contact, which I guess is flattering. It was cramped and I didn't have legroom, so I listened to my yetzer and just let her do that (not as passive as it sounds, but I only count it as a slip), thought at least I didn't look at her or give her any attention.

(TLDR: They gave me a hard time on the bus and gave me some triggers that took a while to shake off. I felt like just letting these people win, whatever that even means.)

I was too tired to properly distract myself with other things that night. I also was having a lot of physical response (*kishuy*). I dealt with it by taking deep breaths and reviewing mishnayot, though any time my mind turned back to what had just happened, the *kishuy*? would come back and I would need to stop walking and take deep breaths for a few seconds. This happened when the light turned green at a crosswalk and I was "too polite" to not cross while cars were waiting for me.

What I did do when I got home was to drink a glass of wine. I figured if I could slow my brain and body down (as depressants will), I would be less bothered that night, and it's not like I was going out. Whether it helped or hurt, G-d knows.

I tried to laugh a little at what had just happened and to have some compassion for myself. I felt shame for opening my eyes at all (and maybe more than I had to) and for not trusting G-d and risking getting a little lost. I felt shame for testing those girls. I realized I would have acted differently if I were truly determined to keep pritzut at a distance, by keeping my eyes closed the whole time (in which case they wouldn't've felt they had an opening) or by getting up and off the bus at an arbitrary stop. In the latter case it would have been a mistake to let any of them catch my eye, so maybe the former was the best option.

Somehow I'm not angry about any of this and am just doing all the same things I was doing

before to keep life interesting and meaningful. Maybe this time I've really chosen that I don't want to fall again. I don't know what I should do next, though.

Have a Good Shabbos

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Re: being kind to myself

Posted by Hashem Help Me - 20 Apr 2018 12:46

If i knew who you were and where you are located i would come ask you to give me a brocho. "Wow" is all i can say. May Hashem help you stay pure and clean and help you avoid all possible triggers (ika darka achrina) as per your true wish. The einei ha'edah of our generation have said that it's people like you that will b'ezras Hashem usher in Moshiach.

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Re: being kind to myself

Posted by Gevura Shebyesod - 20 Apr 2018 13:59

Wow that's an amazing story! KUTGW!!

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Re: being kind to myself

Posted by ieeyc - 20 Apr 2018 17:36

wow,what a big nisayon, i feel bad for you,but im sure the sechar that is waiting for you is unbelievable for every controlling of the eyes,

1.would it helped to have a sefer with you to look into?

2. i dont know if the guys here will like what im going to tell you, but if i would have been in such

a situation, i would have put my finger in my nose to turn her off .youll never see her again anyhow.

anyway i hope you never find yourself in such an awkward/uncomfortable position

good Shabbos!

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Re: being kind to myself

Posted by tzomah - 21 Apr 2018 19:51

wow amazing that you didn't get down

how about looking at the orach chaim on parshas acharei on the passuk k'maaseh eretz mitzrayim lo saaseh

much luck and may you find only spiritually uplifting seudos

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Re: being kind to myself

Posted by anequivalentpath - 24 Apr 2018 20:02

Thanks for the good wishes -- tzomah, I looked through the commentary (about how one must restrain both his eyes and his thoughts in order to not be drawn to sin?) and you may have saved me a fall...I haven't been as diligent about mishnayot the past few days and it was a good reminder not to let my mind wander.

ieeyc -- the finger-in-nose technique is one i will have to practice a little. thanks.

not sure if a sefer would've helped that night

?gevura shebyesod -- i don't have access to that forum.

Hashem Help Me -- thank you for the brachas.

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Re: being kind to myself

Posted by Gevura Shebyesod - 24 Apr 2018 21:00

[stillgoing wrote on 19 Apr 2018 22:59:](#)

Someone once asked me a question on a bus.

What's your ultimate (dream?) goal in all this?

Sg: to stop lusting (etc.) and live a happy productive life.

Asker: So, after a fall, should you kick yourself in the back and mope about "how could you have fallen again", or should you focus that for the rest of the day, you're going to try and be the best sg that you can be.

sg: So basically, you're telling me to ignore the reality that I just fell again and go on as if nothing happened.

Asker: No, I'm telling you that if you have a goal of getting clean - and you just said that you do - then moping after a fall isn't going to get you there. But trying to be the best SG that you can be, will!

ME: What about charuta and teshuva?

Guy in the next row: The first step of teshuva is stopping the sin (azivas ha'chet). That's where you're holding now. You can't jump to the next level before you pass this one. Work on getting clean. The guilt and charuta can come later after you're good and sober. The worst time for it is right after a fall (which is probably why the yetezer harah tries so hard to heap the guilt then (sorry cords).

Bus Driver: So, by ignoring what happened and trying to be the best you can be for the rest of the day, you are actually doing the best teshuva - because you are working to your goal of getting clean. (azivas ha'chet)

old lady: You look like a nice boy, but how come you aren't wearing a coat.

Me: Can I please get by! I'm going to miss my stop! (stumble off bus, I felt like I had been thrown under the bus, instead of riding on it. But actually, the guy had a point. I've changed

disclamer: this story might have had a tiny bit of fiction in how it happened, but it really contains a lot of truth

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Re: being kind to myself

Posted by anequivalentpath - 28 Apr 2018 20:56

Hi all,

Shabbos was rough. Feeling a little sick, though it's nothing serious.

I spent a lot of shabbos lying in bed or sleeping, missed mincha altogether...I was having more than a few hirhurim, feeling guilty about things/people, feeling angry about things/people.

I feel resentment to some past authority figures in my life who I (heretically, wrongly, G-d is in charge etc.) feel ridiculed me in a way that they did not have a right to, in a way that keeps coming back to make my life difficult.

For a long time I've been just stewing about it, figuring there weren't any real alternatives (plenty of assur and stupid ones) but recently something happened that forced me to consider reviewing the laws of LH/rechilus to see if maybe I can do something about this ridiculousness.

Unrelatedly and on a brighter note, I've been reading a book called *?Esh Moharan* and it brings two advices that I want to try...

?1. Apparently the Vilna Gaon says that if a person studies Torah for at least six hours with no interruptions, the next thoughts he has are a form of nevuah. Breslovers took this advice and would read one book for a half hour, switch, etc. for six hours. I've always wanted a *nevuah* (call me naive) so be'h am going to try this tomorrow. (EM's commentary on Likutei Moharan 1)

2. Apparently, as much as we focus on *?shmirat einayim*, there is another even more serious issue of *shmirat aznayim*, being careful what we hear. Rav Berland shlit"a takes this further and

suggests that even "frum" music made in a recording studio with the intent to impress, to control the result, etc., all of those controlling/gaavah-dik thoughts get shared through the music. (EM on LM 3)

Number 2 is easy in the sense that I've stopped listening to music on iTunes already for months, but then there's the issue of neighbors. Also the particular place where I'm living does silly things like hold 3-hour karaoke events outside my window on Saturday afternoons. Things to

Trying to remember to drink plenty of water.

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Re: being kind to myself

Posted by lionking - 29 Apr 2018 02:55

think about when deciding where to move
Gut Voch,

I too struggle alot with resentment. I recently saw a quote from Reb Avigdor Miller which for me was a big chizuk. He said in a speech once, that he still has a hard time forgiving someone and moving past something that happened 20 years prior. I thought to myself, Wow! He was a mishlum b'midos, and still struggled with this. It is totally normal for me to feel resentful. I don't need to also feel bad or ridiculous that I am feeling resentful.

I try to write down the feelings and give it up, instead of letting it stew and cook up worse and worse.

Regarding the second half of your post, I have my personal reservations about it, and was going to comment. however if you feel this would help you, do what you consider best.

Hatzlacha Rabba

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