

Steve's Journal

Posted by Steve - 15 Dec 2009 18:46

So here I am, finally beginning my journey into my New Way of Living, thanx to Reb Guard, Duvid Chaim, the fearless crew on the Good Ship Lust-Will-Pop, and the GYE family.

I got here around 7/28/08 while searching for chizuk for shmiras eiynayim, signed up for the emails, then wasted over a year letting them collect in an inbox folder hoping to get to read them one day. The forum looked too intricate for me to navigate, so I didn't even try.

B"H for "falls" at the right time, cuz picking myself up from one led me to finally read one email. And THAT ONE, ladies and germs, is where I saw the advert for DC's new 12-Step Program Group Call, and thank G-D I followed the links to find out more. Again, Hashem was stretching out His hand to me, but THIS time, I TOOK IT!! I joined his group when it started in October.

I NEVER would have suspected I was a sexaholic, I just thought I was a guy with a very big yetzer hora for "girlwatching" that just got out of hand with the ease of internet access. But when I read the descriptions that an addict is ONE WHO KNOWS HE SHOULD STOP, BUT CAN NOT, or described as someone who loses time from work and family because of this uncontrollable drive, someone whose life is heading to ruination, it hit me. Those words described me to a tee. I was seeing myself and my uncontrollable life mirrored in the words of so many others, I couldn't believe it! I WAS NOT ALONE.

All the years of acting out; the guilt and the shame; the hours glued to bad sites while family time and parnose slipped away; the lying to my children who'd call me at work and ask "when are you coming home, Ta?" And I'd close my eyes to the screen to say "I have to work late", then open them up again after the call to keep watching for hours more... And the self hate, the loathing, the name calling and cursing of myself I did when I'd drive home at 3 am, the promises to Hashem, and then breaking them the very next morning. Days, months, YEARS lost, and I thought I could climb out of it on my own one day.

Duvid Chaim and the brave members of our crew have shown me the real way out of this decrepit existence, toward a life of freedom from this "lust addiction", and hopefully from my other shortcomings as well.

On the calls I found people whom I could talk to thru the blessed veil of anonymity, to discover who I really am and find how I could heal, and on the forum I found the rest of you, inspirational and needy both, and I've been blessed that I could help a little here and there. What I love best is that the time I would have spent on my computer pushing Hashem out of the world, I am now using to pull Him back in, into my life and the life of others.

Thanx to Duvid Chaim, I am on the road to recovery. It was hard to accept that "I'm a pickle, and will never be a cucumber again." He showed me logically the truth behind it. But I never really understood the depth of my emotional loss at that recognition until I read Letakein's amazing poem, Falling Leaves. She wrote that to help herself heal, but by sharing it, she MADE me heal. I wasn't afraid to take the next step, to Let Go and Let G-d, to trust His re-creating me into something new, even tho I do not know where it's heading.

So, my friends (and it means so much to me to be able to call y'all that), I will be using this journal to share with you my ups and downs (which I'm sure I'll have – we're only human), Please forgive me if it's not as dramatic, or filled with "near brink disasters" as so many of you brave people have to fight every day. I stand in awe of your strengths, your courage and your honesty. THIS is the place on earth for real Milchomas Hashem.

I will try my best to post everyday, and the next few days I'll add short installments of the BIG inspiration I had just before this Shabbos, on Erev Chanukah, that I'm still flying high from. The A & W's just kept rolling in, so stay tuned!!

Even tho I've been clean now since starting the calls 7 weeks ago, I'm gonna start my 90-day count as of Monday, the third day of Chanukah. Marked for my memory by my physical birthday, but in honor of my spiritual re-birth thru the 12-Steps and ALL of GYE.

Starting this Chanukah, may we all be blessed together to move far away from the Great Darkness that has owned us until now, and come into the GREAT LIGHT of Hashem's Love.

Kein Yehi Ratzon.

Steve.

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Re: Steve's Journal

Posted by Steve - 07 Jul 2010 02:25

Hoo-wee...!!

Cant stay here too long, just wanna let y'all know things are BH going very well right now. got a nice downpayment from mr. formerly disgruntled client that i made my amends conversation with, and BH I'm pumped and ready to do his work and not disappoint him. Also got a lot of other work done, and now finishing up the few small clients I need to get off my desk b4 tackling the bigger ones.

I've seen a lot of hatzlacha asking HKBH for his strength and to remove my fears, and then just dive into my work. And i've been avoiding procrastination triggers like the forum (sorry guys) and the gmail (sorry guys) and the itunes movie trailer (NOT sorry, guys!!), even avoiding CNN and Arutz Sheva (now THAT"S tough).

BH I have not been a LUST-O-MATIC maniac, (doubling the 90 days helps). But the YH is still there, sometimes he knocks REALLY LOUD. When that happens, i know I've gotten weaker in my 12 step action, and have to build that up again. CHAZARA and ACTION.

But as I actually accomplish things at work, I am finding the RID is a lot less strong. That means I'm happier in general with life, even though i'm still fat and balding. And i'm finding more patience for others who's actions would have annoyed me and sent me into resentment. So BH the lust urges, while not gone completely, are definitely dulled. And i see if i start to entertain even the slightest urge, like to girl-watch, then all the old urges start coming back, and stronger.

Which just means I'm a pickle, and i'll never be a cucumber again.

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Re: Steve's Journal

Posted by sci1977 - 08 Jul 2010 02:22

One of your best posts every. Thank you for sharing.

KUTGW!!!!

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Re: Steve's Journal

Posted by zalmandovid - 08 Jul 2010 03:09

I love pickles. :-*

Regards,

Zalmandovid

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Re: Steve's Journal

Posted by Steve - 08 Jul 2010 15:15

I get a regular email from AJOP, and in it today was this article: See this photo:

www.forward.com/workspace/assets/images/articles/essapickle-062410.jpg

The store, Ess-A-Pickle — Yiddish for “eat a pickle” — opened in March. It is the latest incarnation of Guss’ Pickles, the Lower East Side culinary institution that spent almost a century as a monument to immigrant New York City. The shop, with its trademark pickle barrels lining the sidewalk, closed in late 2009.

For the owner Pat Fairhurst, a Catholic who grew up in Brooklyn's Boro Park, Ess-A-Pickle is a homecoming of sorts... Moving to Boro Park has meant fewer tourists on a sentimental journey and more questions like, "Did you get the certification yet?"

Ess-A-Pickle is OU-certified, but Fairhurst is waiting for a rabbi to finish investigating the dozens of spices she uses before she can obtain the stricter Central Rabbinical Congress (CRC) hekhsher, or certification, that the Chassidic Orthodox families are looking for. Fairhurst said the process is 99% complete.

"They keep coming and saying, 'You've gotta get it. You need a hekhsher,' " she said, softly laughing. "I say, 'No, I don't. You need a hekhsher,' because I'm not Jewish."

(For the record, Fairhurst's store is closed on Saturdays and shuts down at 4 p.m. on Fridays out of respect for the Sabbath.)

I was really taken by this line: " **You** need a hekhsher', because I'm not Jewish."

NOW, **being a PICKLE**, I KNOW a thing or two. And to ME, this message means that I can not give myself a reliable hekhsher. I can't be trusted not to succumb to temptations of using cheaper ingredients and tainting my product with unkosher spices. I need BOTH a **Certification from a Higher Authority** (absolutely **NO NOD** to Hebrew National intended) AND a **Mashgiyach**, an agent of the certifying Agency who watches over ME to make sure I am not TAINTED by any UNKOSHER SPICES. After all, cucumbers start out completely KOSHER when they are CREATED, they just get CHANGED when somebody SURROUNDS them with OUTSIDE FORCES. Now, those forces could still be KOSHER, meaning HOLY influences, and the pickle comes out sweet and juicy and a beautiful green color, and being KOSHER gives NACHAS to the One who grew the cuc to begin with. But if it got surrounded, smothered by UNKOSHER, meaning UNHOLY influences, it turns a resentful puke green color, smells and tastes sour, and will not give much Nachas back to the Farmer.

Lucky for me, the moshul ends there, for a REAL sour pickle can't change into a sweet one, let alone go back to being a cute cuc. But ME, hey, I'm a GYE PICKLE, which is a CHAMELEON PICKLE. I can get rid of those treif ingredients that tainted me. I can surround myself with KEDUSHA and TAHARA, and if I stay there long enough, their sweet flavors will take over, and either push out or cover up the sour ones. I'LL ALWAYS BE A PICKLE, BUT I CAN BECOME - AND REMAIN - A KOSHER ONE.

To do THAT, I need a MASHGIACH, and for me that means GYE and the 12 STEPS and a SPONSOR and PROGRAM BUDDIES. Because i know that they are sheluchim of the CERTIFYING AUTHORITY, Hashem Yisborach Himself. And if I want to have HIS hekhsher, I have to use His approved ingredients. I can't even keep anything trief nearby, not only so i wont be tempted, or even accidently use them. I must remember that the Baal HaHekhsherim also won't like me to appear suspicious in anyone's eyes, or He might pull the Hekhsher, because Maaris Ayin influences others to do the wrong thing.

So if I'M tempted to look "secretly" at a woman i pass by, even if I think no one notices, its VERY POSSIBLE that SOMEONE down here DOES see it, a goy who will think poorly of Jews (oh, they're just as much animals as everyone else!) or a secular yid who will think poorly of frumkeit (oh, the Torah doesn't make them any more holy than me!) or even another frum man, or my own sons who will weaken their resolve to avoid zenus (oh, HE does it, why can't I!).

So even tho (I hope) we ALL love PICKLES, too, it's important to realize that being a pickle comes with responsibilty. But the knowlege that I'm walkin around, under the HEKHSHER of Hashem himself, well, **THAT is an approval I feel PROUD to NEED.**

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Re: Steve's Journal

Posted by bardichev - 08 Jul 2010 15:24

steve!!

that was a great post!!!!

b

p.s. half sour my favoite,flaums it needs to leak in the car too ,not like your huge b&g pickle slicess you buy in bardstown costco,enough picle slices for the whole kehillas bardstown,just buy flaums

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Re: Steve's Journal

Posted by BecomeHoly - 08 Jul 2010 18:28

you are the most eloquent pickle I know :-)

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Re: Steve's Journal

Posted by zalmandovid - 09 Jul 2010 04:31

Thanks for that Super Post

Regards,

Zalmandovid

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Re: Steve's Journal

Posted by Steve - 09 Jul 2010 13:44

Funny how sometimes the LONG posts make up for that lack of many SHORT ones...

Dude, 8) That was awesome!!
let this be on account, then, I guess...

HAVE A GREAT, SUPER-FANTASTICO SHABBOS, EVERYONE!!

And to Paraphrase my good friend Sci-guy,

"No RID wanted, NONE needed!!!"

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Re: Steve's Journal

Posted by Steve - 12 Jul 2010 19:05

Hi Guys!!

News on the Horizon - It looks like I'll be hosting a second telephone conference time option in conjunction with Duvid Chaim's group call. This will be a "sister ship" to Duvid Chaim's "cruise" thru the 12-Steps, and should follow the same pattern as his does - understanding our addiction and taking the steps together that will lead us to REAL and LASTING FREEDOM from Lust.

Everyone is welcome aboard, newcomers as well as veterans of previous cruises.

The "Flotilla" of both ships will IY"H leave port on Monday, July 26, 2010. My group will meet from 8:30-9:30am, and Duvid Chaim's will still be at 12:00 Noon to 1:00pm NYC time (i can never remember if we're on EST or DST, so I always go by NYT, or NYCT if you wanna get technical). We'll be using the same telephone conference number and access code as Duvid Chaim's group. Both groups will be meeting 4 days a week, Monday-Thursday at their respective hours, and the goal is to move thru the pages of the AA Big Book at the same speed. If one from our chevra knows they have to miss their regularly scheduled shift, they can jump on board on the other hour and not miss out - like a Daf Yomi kinda thingy. Plus we can reach out to more chevra for whom noon was difficult.

As this GYE page on Duvid Chaim's Conference describes (see www.guardyoureyes.org/?page_id=678):

What it is: An in-depth 12-Step Big-Book Study Lunch & Learn; an SA style group for men who are willing to make a serious commitment to finally find the freedom from their addiction; as literally promised by the Program.

I am really looking forward to making this amazing, recovery-focused program accessible to more guys, and growing TOGETHER toward LIGHT and SERENITY.

Anyone who is interested, has questions or needs more info, please feel free to PM me, or you can email me directly at steve.s.613@gmail.com . It's advisable to have a copy of the AA Big Book (follow links from the GYE page above) and the ability to highlight (or underline) and take notes in the margins or in a separate pad, already from the first day we meet.

Beracha V'Hatzlacha,

Steve

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Re: Steve's Journal

Posted by bardichev - 13 Jul 2010 06:05

Steev. I read it.

Much haTyzlahca

See ya in bardstown

(Again)

B

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Re: Steve's Journal

Posted by Steve - 13 Jul 2010 17:44

Thanx, bardy-boy.

Gang, let me joost tell you-all that the idea of being a sponsor, of leading a group, is an amazing chizuk tool for one's own struggles. How can I possibly give in to the lust urge if I have to lead a group of men thru discussions based on "total honesty"?! It's a real Michaiyev. I recommend everyone who can bravely take the plunge, to advance along to Step 12 and build a solid foundation to their recovery thru getting involved, sponsoring, mentoring, and spreading the opportunity for Freedom from this disease, to those who reach out to you for it.

OK, back to woik.

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Re: Steve's Journal

Posted by Steve - 14 Jul 2010 16:52

hi gang.

Wanna mention I'm trying to focus more on my kids. I got tweens, teens, and almost shidduchiners, so my head keeps turning. But I'm finding that when I work at making a connection to them, I find that they've been yearning for that, and I didn't know it. I'm trying not to criticize, even hint that way. Rather, i'm trying to focus on the positive, "catch them doing something right," and let them know how proud i am of them. It gives me something to do to combat my feelings of messing up as a parent, which 100% was because of my addiction.

It's time to try to right those wrongs. I'm gonna make the "jump" to doing individual 9th step calls with them. Who knows? Maybe they'll decide I'm not the enemy, and listen to my advice a little.

Ciao,

Steve

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Re: Steve's Journal

Posted by briut - 14 Jul 2010 20:24

[Steve wrote on 14 Jul 2010 16:52:](#)

Wanna mention I'm trying to focus more on my kids.

My oldest is leaving the house soon, and the others aren't far behind (at least by grownup years; teens think it'll take forever). I'm also thinking about how I could have done better to establish bonds, mess up less, make amends more, etc.

But I don't think any of us has done as badly we might think. Or as badly as our teens might charge us with (although b'H mine are nice about this). And sometimes just a little bit of "activating" those good times can do a lot.

Every time I drive a carpool and get a little captive 1:1 time, or do an overnight with a kid, or whatever, I'm reminded how easy it is to re-establish the ties -- in a good way. I bet you do this, too -- it's just time to claim a little more credit for yourself.

Nu?

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Re: Steve's Journal

Posted by 1daat - 15 Jul 2010 03:26

Your working on your stuff with the kids is heart warming. One grown, one out the door, and one who sleeps alot. I made big mistakes (your comments about not being as bad as we think, notwithsatnding, Briut.). But kids are so forgiving. My experience has been that it's never too late. KUTGW

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