

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 einyayim, 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 existance, 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 Yosef Hatzadik - 29 Jul 2010 20:30

[Steve wrote on 29 Jul 2010 20:05:](#)

Have a GREAT Shabbos!!

With your devoted leadership, we will learn how to have a "Good" Shabbos!!!

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Re: Steve's Journal
Posted by Steve - 30 Jul 2010 04:05

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We had a fantastic understanding on the call today. The difference between **counting the days of sobriety**, and **living one's life in recovery**.

We've all been there, in the beginning of amassing clean days, when we were "white knuckling" our way thru the days. Where does that moshul come from?

Didja ever ride or watch a rollercoaster? Are you fearless or fearful when you ride one?

What do the scared people do? They grab onto the bar in front of them for dear life, so hard their knuckles turn white. What are they afraid of? Well, they don't trust the ones who made and operate the train: "Maybe my car will fall off, maybe the seat belt will break, maybe I'll fall out, maybe the operator will be shmoozing on the cell phone and we'll crash into another train, etc."

But what do the confident people do with THEIR hands? They throw them in the air and scream with delight as they enjoy the ride!! Why aren't they afraid? Because they TRUST the designer and operator of the train that they know what they're doing: "The train is made well and safe, the speed is calculated for the centrifugal force to keep us in the seats when upside down, it's so safe I can put my hands in the air, not hold on, and enjoy the excitement and the rush of the wind by my ears!"

All of life is a rollercoaster. And Who built it? Hashem. Who runs the ride? Hashem. If we think it's all up to us, we can't accept it that we're not in control, then we hang on scared for dear life. But if we TRUST in Hashem, creator and operator of all of life, and the things which come our way, then we can relax and enjoy the ride.

Duvid Chaim put it VERY well, when he said that yaknow, we're all human, and many of us along our journey might slip and fall for a short moment. He said "I care less about the QUANTITY of days in sobriety before the fall; I care more about the QUALITY of the recovery before the fall."

Yes, it's important to build both consecutive and cumulative day counts of cleanliness and sobriety. But that's not where it should end, it's not where we're gonna find happiness. We must ask "what is the QUALITY of those days?" Am I going thru my life afraid, full of tension and RID, "white knuckling" my way from Modeh Ani until Hashkiveinu? Or am I living life with my hands in the air, enjoying my days by handling life's curveballs without the RID, a life of recovery where the Lust Urge is either on the fringe or not even on the radar, where I don't even have the DESIRE to Lust?

Kol HaKovod to all the brave men and women who have taken the bold steps to free themselves from their Lust, and valiantly push to get as many clean days under their belt as they can. Your strength and perseverance are amazing, and a testimony to the purity of your beautiful neshomos.

But that's not the final destination. And you know it.

To be truly free is to be living in Recovery. Contentment, and purpose in sharing and giving strength to other strugglers. Shaking off the Lust urges, which are now light taps on the shoulders, flicking them away like a pesky fly. Lifting your hands in the air with love of life, and beseeching Hashem for more life so you could be Davuk with Him.

The 12 Steps are a Program for Recovery from addiction. It offers promises of recovery which are REAL and ATTAINABLE, but we must WORK the STEPS with willingness and effort.

Love to all of youz guyz (n' galz), and best wishes for an AWESOME Shabbos!!

Steve

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Re: Steve's Journal
Posted by Holy Yid - 30 Jul 2010 17:34

Good shabbos

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Re: Steve's Journal
Posted by sci1977 - 03 Aug 2010 13:39

Dropping in to say. Hope all is well. Knowing you I am sure it is.

KUTGW!!

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Re: Steve's Journal

Posted by Steve - 04 Aug 2010 19:39

Hi guys. thanx for the good wishes.

I had the amazing experience last nite of attending yet another chasunah in complete freedom, spiritually healthy, where I could exist without the lust urges and enjoy the simcha as it was meant to be enjoyed. Women were dressed the way they do at these things, so many knees in the chuppah room, yet lust just wasn't on my radar.

Better than saying "I haven't felt this way in years", and can truly say "I haven't FELT in years!" I was in tears at the chuppah. Here I was actually being able to feel the joy and beauty of a seeing my dear old friend of 30 years, with his wife who survived a stroke just a few years ago, walking their first child to the chuppah, their daughter I watched grow up from a baby. To share in this moment, connected to years of love and friendship, and I was actually able to FEEL my emotions. Unclouded by the fallout from lust. And I danced with abandon!

Of course, a few shots of Woodford helped to loosen my heart. But the main ingredient was my recovery.

Lest you think me an angel, believe me I have times when the YH tries to get at me. There's a pretty young woman at work that I have to be more "on guard" when I pass her. I'm not fooling myself into complacency or rationalization - I realize that if I allow myself the "pleasure" of looking and contemplating her body, I WILL start to slip BIG TIME. So I use the 12 steps tools, and have to reuse them someday multiple times.

But at the wedding, I was so full of joy and contentment that THERE WAS NO NEED TO LUST, no need for my drug of choice. Joy and contentment replaced pain and anxiety, so that the "urge" wasn't there. The room was filled with PEOPLE, not objects. And BH I felt what I call the "blessed indifference" to any triggers that night.

The Freedom of Living in Recovery is a beautiful thing. May we all be zoche to experience it more and more!

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Re: Steve's Journal
Posted by bardichev - 04 Aug 2010 19:51

it WAS the woooferd

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Re: Steve's Journal
Posted by humanbeing - 04 Aug 2010 19:52

Wow...You express your feelings so beautifully. You're a true inspiration.

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Re: Steve's Journal
Posted by Me3 - 04 Aug 2010 20:08

Yeah, I know. Isn't bardy great? He always expresses himself perfectly.

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Re: Steve's Journal
Posted by sci1977 - 04 Aug 2010 20:17

Mazel tov my friend. I am very proud of you. That is the best news I got all week.

KUTGW!!

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Re: Steve's Journal

Posted by an honest mouse - 04 Aug 2010 23:07

well done - you're a real inspiration!

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Re: Steve's Journal

Posted by Holy Yid - 06 Aug 2010 02:54

beautiful piece, very moving, I am almost in tears. It is so true that when we lust we don't feel.
So so so true.

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Re: Steve's Journal

Posted by david712 - 06 Aug 2010 15:01

Steve,

We miss your voice on this quite Friday morning.

Now that you tasted Woooferd - remember to make a Le'chaim after the fish.

Good Shabbos.

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Re: Steve's Journal

Posted by Steve - 06 Aug 2010 15:23

Oh, I always make a L'Chaim after the fish! Any excuse for a l'chaim!! But it's usually on wine,

not woody.

And my whole family joins in the l'chaims - and we use the opportunity to bentch klal yisroel, every time. We sing out together:

"L'Chaim! L'Chaim! L'Chaim! L'Chaim! Sholom, Simcha, Beracha, Hatzlacha! Siman Tov U'Mazal Tov Y'Hei Lanu, u'LChol Yisroel, Amein!!"

We also have a minhag that I say "L'Kovod Shabbos Kodesh" before my first bite of each course (I saw that at the home of a choshuv and beloved Rov in town, and adopted it). And I couldn't believe it, my children on their own took on not to begin each course unless my wife and i have either taken our first bite of that course, or given our permission for them to begin first.

I hope that's a sign that their parents are doin' *something* right!

Have a GREAT Shabbos, my friend!! It was really something special to have gotten to meet you, and I can only hope that the kesher will grow stronger. KUTGW!!

Everybody, have a GREAT SHABBOS!! look for those A&W (Awe & Wonder) moments. It's not hard to do - you can find them in **Anything & Everything!!** (hee hee - nice chop!!)

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Re: Steve's Journal

Posted by Steve - 08 Aug 2010 14:58

Hey guys. good Voch!!

Last night I had some private time around 11pm, and I decided to call one of the chevra to touch base, say hello, etc. HKBH put it into my head to reach out to one particular guy, and it

was amazing hashgacha "produce", as he was teetering at the edge of the proverbial cliff at the moment. B"H, just that little bit of connecting and getting out of isolation helped him get past the nisayon.

We can't underestimate the power of friendship and achdus! We all know we can reach out, call someone when we are in need of a chaver to hold onto us for just a few minutes. but we don't have to wait until WE are in an SOS or someone calls US in an SOS.

Think about guys who have called you in the past, PM'ed you, posted by you, bantered with you, or even ones who you have just enjoyed their posts from afar and to whom you feel a kesher. REACH OUT AND TOUCH THEM. Send out a call or a contact just to say a hello, how'r ya doin', jus' been thinkin' 'bout ja, etc. Even if you personally are feeling strong at the moment, maybe someone else is feeling weak just then, or could use a virtual hug right now as insurance for the future.

I cant tell you how many times it helped me to keep strong when I thought of my good friends here at GYE or in the 12-Step Program, rooting me on, caring and being there for me. That strength and encouragement is worth gold to me. And then when I actually get to SPEAK to one of you on the phone?! That chizuk, that connection can protect me for DAYS!!

A few of you guys shared your anonymous numbers (google voice, fr'instance) with me thru PMs, and our friendships bloomed more that way.

So everybody, MAKE YOUR CONNECTIONS, take advantage of the PMs of the forum to get as close with each other as you can. Make it personal, and GO FOR IT!!

Have a GREAT DAY!!

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