

Here we go...

Posted by Searchin345 - 20 Jul 2020 19:05

Hi everyone. I tried doing this a few years ago, but I fell at around 40 days and I never had the patience to officially start over. I maybe had other periods since then where I had several weeks when I was clean. My last fall was this last motzei Shabbos, and I think it is time to say that enough is enough.

The problem is that I am not sure how motivated I really am. I don't feel like I really want to stop that badly. I am not the type of person who watches every day. Every few weeks I'll have a few bad days in a row. I like to tell myself that "It's under control".

It's just something that I know has to end. This has been an issue since I was 14, and it's almost 20 years later. I can't go on like this for ever. If not now when? So I'm just jumping in...

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Re: Here we go...

Posted by Im Tevakshena Kakasef - 18 Aug 2020 11:06

Hi Searchin,

Read your thread. Wishing you much hatzlocha on your journey.

I remembering doing that all the time. I had a certain filter, and 'just to see if it works' preceded to try 3000 URL's (an exaggeration) before getting through. Honestly, it can be more than plain lust. You now have a challenge to beat, which can be fun, albeit tedious, even in its own right. I mean there's an additional thrill of bypassing a filter, as well as the desire to lust.

Switching off after you got straight through was great willpower. And remember, GYE rules state explicitly its only a fall if you remain on the site for more than a few seconds. What you did wasn't a fall at all. A slip perhaps, but not a fall. Don't let the yetzer blow it up. You won that time not him.

They ask, why is it that the Torah blesses a sotah, who passes the test, that she will have children? O.K. she didn't commit adultery, but she did do the isur deoraise of yichud!? They

answer, true, she did do something wrong. But when you are in the grip of the yetzer, when she was alone with that man, and she pulled free - that is an incredible achievement that the Torah blesses her for. She managed, in the grip of the yetzer, to pull free. That deserves a beracha.

Much hatzlocha. You're doing great.

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Re: Here we go...

Posted by Searchin345 - 22 Sep 2020 17:43

Day 64.

So it's been a while since I last posted, mostly because I've been busy and things where going mostly well baruch Hashem. I did have a few "ha'aros" up until this point which I wanted to share, especially as things are starting to get really difficult.

1. Being busy is really a great way to keep away from the really bad stuff. Your mind is too occupied with other things than to dwell on these lusts. Obviously, we aren't really always in control of how busy we are, but I guess it helps if we try to be busy.
2. Going into Rosh Hashanah, I was think a little bit, and I think this streak has caused be to be a little more lax in other areas of avodas Hashem. Not to the point where I am committing straight out aveiros, just a general more laid back attitude. There is this subconscious idea in the head, "you are doing so well with this thing and it's worth so much, you don't need to put as much effort into the other things". Not sure if anyone else can relate to this, and I'm not sure what to do about it, because I kind of feel like it's true.
3. Looking at things online and shemiras eyinain on the street are two totally different battles. The former at this point is where I am currently seeing progress (hence "the streak"), but the latter, not so much so...
4. At this point, much of the motivation has worn off. At this point there is an active part of me that really wants to break it. Right now what's kind of keeping me going is Yom Kippur coming up, and also the idea that eventually this will make my relationship with my wife better. (which I

haven't really seen so much at this point. Not that we have a bad relationship, just that I haven't felt that this has caused it to be better).

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Re: Here we go...

Posted by Youngster - 22 Sep 2020 18:55

Hi read your thread, I wanted to point out regarding your second point, about feeling lax in other mitzvos, since your doing so well in this area. I use to have a similar mindset, until I changed my way of thinking about hashem and mitzvos.

If you look at hashem like someone that put us here and told us "listen, I have a big gehenom, and if you dont do so and so you'll end up there..." and looking on mitzvos and eveiros like a burden that he put on us, then when we fail in this area, it puts pressure on us to be better in all other mitzvos because we know that were on the wrong side... and we just wanna feel like we're not in trouble... and on the other hand when we're better in this area we feel more safe... so we are not so pressured....

but if you look on it differently, like when a father tells a child "if you walk in the street you will be punished" we know that the father isnt looking for a way to punish the child, and he isnt waiting to show him what happens if he dares not to follow rules... he just wants to keep his child safe, the same with hashem he gave us mitzvos because that's the best for us, the gehenom is like the punishment the child gets for walking on the street, because we dont understand the danger of the aveira itself. And the same with mitzvos, hashem gave it to us because it's best for us, dont think about doing it because of the oiness, think about how proud hashem is from you and how much schar you'll get, and what a difference you make to him, and then the notion of "I think I did enough in that area" becomes less relevant.

It took me time to change my mindset and I still need to remind myself some times but it makes mitzvos much more sweet....

(it migh also help you in giving you a reason to work on this, knowing that if hashem says it's a problem it's like a child going on a street, even if we dont always see what's so wrong -it's more less under control etc.- we know that hashem knows what's good for us, and he warned us not to do it for good reasons)

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Re: Here we go...

Posted by wilnevergiveup - 22 Sep 2020 20:08

I like what @Youngster wrote it's a really nice approach.

I would like to point out one along these lines, that I went through a similar period and after thinking about it for a while I think I can explain why it happened to me and perhaps you can relate.

While I was acting out I would feel horrible and among many awful feelings the overwhelming feeling was of guilt and worthlessness.

To counter these feelings, we tend to look to the opposite extreme, to be extra zealous in other areas to "make up" for our shortcomings in this area.

This is a common result of low self esteem and low self image.

As we grow and gain some confidence in whatever it is that we are struggling with, this need to "compensate" also fades away.

Obviously every person is different, but I needed to figure out who I really was and who was the "just for show" me, i.e. the me that was just to make me feel like I deserved to exist. It took a real long time to figure this one out so if you can relate, don't expect instant results.

Real avodas Hashem needs to come from a real place. I am not saying that it needs to be lishmah, what I am saying is that it should not come from a place of guilt shame or low self esteem.

I hope this is helpful.

All the best,

Wilnevergiveup

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Re: Here we go...

Posted by Searchin345 - 23 Sep 2020 18:36

Day 65

Yes, I am posting for the second day in a row. It's been building up for quite some time, but today I feel more than ever that it is getting to be almost unbearable. Almost everything is becoming a trigger. I feel stuck. I have no outlet. (Without getting into details, wife has also been asur for a while, and is also going to be asur for around another month at this point, which definitely doesn't help. Not sure if I should leave that for baal habatim's forum).

I keep telling myself that there is nothing that is "forcing" me to go down that path, but it's not helping so much.

I think the worst part is that it isn't getting any better, in a way it is only getting worse. The real thing that's just keeping me going at this point is the idea of not "breaking the streak". I don't see how after 90 days this is going to get any easier.

A new reality is kind of dawning upon me which I have to adjust to. GYE is very nice, and there is a lot of chizuk and ideas to help you keep going. But at the end of the day it will still boil down to the one thing: Will Power. Yes, you might get new perspectives on things, but at the end of the day there will be that point where the desire is so great and none of it matters. All of the tips and tricks don't matter. One thing matters, and it's will power, if will you be able to overcome. Most people on this site, including me have failed so many times we convince ourselves that it isn't possible to overcome it, so it must be "something else" which is missing. We tells ourselves that maybe I just have to try a different method or change by hashkafah or do introspection or whatever. It might help for some time, but at the end of the day, there will be a point where you just get that crazy urge and you need to overcome it. Nothing is going to change that. When I realized this at first it was a little depressing. As I write this, I am getting used to it a little bit. I guess that's what we were put here for...

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Re: Here we go...

Posted by Grant400 - 23 Sep 2020 19:22

What you wrote about it being solely up to you, and completely up to your self control is a realization everyone must come to eventually. We all think that we are missing something. If only we were like this...when we...if we...eventually...hopefully etc. Nope. It's us and now, that's it. We can gather ideas, learn new perspectives, practice tips and tricks that can help, but it's all a help not the actual solution.

You write that this understanding is something that you must get used to. I want to just say that yes it is incredibly daunting realizing that it's entirely up to you and there's no quick fix, but at the same time, in a way, I found it liberating. And I don't exclusively mean regarding lust.

When confronted by an urge or anything like it before this realization, I would sometimes fall to pieces feeling out of my depth and incapable. I would be trying a new "method" or "solution" and be frustrated that it didn't work. I wasn't miraculously cured! Oh my gosh! I must implement a different trick, or maybe I should do this or that...or this...or that...and around in circles.

Understanding this vital component, that it's up to you is the best "method". Just exercise self control and discipline. Yes its hard, excruciatingly hard, but that's what is required. I promise you with this understanding, after fighting for a while it will get much easier. It actually got much harder for me before it got easier, but eventually I became a different person. Not a luster with a method. Not a luster with a lawyer. Not a luster with a response. No, I became someone who is in control and controls the lust through self control.

Obviously we must still be smart. No access to triggering material. No being meyached with prostitutes. No staring at naked women. No having other women perform for you. No pleasuring yourself with other women. Oh, of course I know you would never do those things...only on the internet, or in my mind. Because.. um..it's different? Is it?

We can't rely on self control completely. There is a point where self control won't cut it. That's why chazal forbade yichud. But we can use self control to prevent us ever being put into said situations. Filters, not looking, learning to stop fantasizing etc.

Regarding everything being a trigger, it's painful as hell, but that's the way it is only in the beginning. After a few weeks of control it will calm down.

This is one fight you won't regret.

Much success,

Grant

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Re: Here we go...

Posted by DavidT - 23 Sep 2020 19:56

Ultimately, only Hashem can overcome the addiction for us. As Chazal say: *"If Hashem doesn't help him, he cannot overcome him"* (the Yetzer Hara). But, in order for Hashem to fight for us, we need to know that we can't do it alone, and we need to reconnect with Hashem in a very fundamental way and learn a complete dependency on Him; much as a one day old baby depends on its mother.

The secret to success is to let Hashem do it for us, as the Pasuk says: *"Hashem yilachem lachem, ve'atem tacharishun* – Hashem will fight for you, and you shall be silent." To accomplish this, however, we need to learn to completely trust in Hashem. And those who learn this and give over the struggle to Hashem are amazed to find that Hashem actually removes the lust from them and keeps them "sober". This technique is nothing short of miraculous, but it has been documented thousands of times by the most hopeless cases of addiction in 12-Step groups around the world, since the 1930s.

The Gemara says that Chavakuk Hanavi summed up all of the Torah in one statement, "Tzadik Be'emunoso Yich'ye – The Tzadik will live in his faith." Rashi explains that in earlier generations, people had the strength to concentrate on all 613 mitzvos; however, in the later generations we simply cannot. So Chavakuk Hanavi gave us the key: Concentrate on Emunah (Faith) and Hashem will take care of everything else.

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Re: Here we go...

Posted by Captain - 24 Sep 2020 00:36

Willpower is no doubt very important. But how long can a person last on just willpower with nothing else? Using willpower is very draining.

But imagine someone could actually get himself to want to overcome the yetzer hora, that somehow his greatest wish is to win? That he feels he gains so much by winning that he wants it so much, maybe even stronger than his lusts? That he understands he can stop viewing himself as a nebuch and actually become one of the greatest individuals EVER (not an exaggeration), because it is so hard to win so winning is so great?

It's not so easy to get ourselves there, and maybe not everyone can. I don't know. But I think we at least owe it to ourselves to try. Maybe an "overload" of this perspective would help even if a daily message did not? I don't know. But let's at least try.

(For me, the resources in my signature were helpful to attain this. Try them. And ask others for what worked for them.)

And of course, this does not contradict the idea that WE have to put our foot down and say that we can't rely on anyone else other than Hashem and we have to make it happen! Like Rabbi Elazar ben Dordia (Avodah Zara 17a), we have to say "the matter is only dependent on me!"

(I hope this was not offensive in any way. I didn't mean it to be argumentative only to help. If this doesn't work for you, then make believe I never said anything.)

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Re: Here we go...

Posted by Searchin345 - 24 Sep 2020 02:44

Grant, thanks for the validation. I hope it does get easier, because right now it is only getting worse.

David, can you explain me what this means "giving it to Hashem"? I don't think I ever really understood what that meant. Is there a specific article you can send me which explains it?

Captain, I will try to look at your links.

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Re: Here we go...

Posted by YeshivaGuy - 05 Oct 2020 23:01

Hey buddy, where are we holding?

We need YOU!!

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Re: Here we go...

Posted by Searchin345 - 07 Oct 2020 05:19

Day 79.

Baruch HaShem things are easier then last week. Still difficult, but manageable. I still don't see myself doing this forever, but I guess we go one day at a time...

What kind of scares me is that my main motivation right now is the streak. It's also the concept of "I want to be someone who doesn't do that". But my desire for the issur is still very strong and I don't feel in my bones that it is something very bad. Shabbos, kashrus, those things are in my core. It intrinsically feels to me like issur. This one however doesn't give me that same feeling. I'm not sure if anyone can relate to this. (To just convey the point, I would never think to watch these things on Shabbos or Yom Tov).

Also, had a dream last night and woke up with keri. First time in maybe a month or even more. I kind of gave in, while earlier on in my streak I might have been stronger. But either way wouldn't have done such a thing if I was awake, so I guess that's a level...

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Re: Here we go...

Posted by wilnevergiveup - 07 Oct 2020 07:31

[Searchin345 wrote on 07 Oct 2020 05:19:](#)

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feeling. I'm not sure if anyone can relate to this. (To just convey the point, I would never think to watch these things on Shabbos or Yom Tov).

You bring up a very good point, one that many here struggle with. Although being mechalel shabbos or eating not kosher is something that we don't really struggle with, this is not (for the most part) because we just love Hashem and want to do his will, in fact you will find it hard to find someone who actually thinks about Hashem while refraining from these things (and that's after you found someone who actually thinks period...).

Think about this for a moment, why then do we do all those things and why are they for the most part not a challenge?

The answer is not a great one, but it puts things into perspective. Don't freak out that you don't *feel* this issur as much as other issurim and use how those other ones are unthinkable as your barometer because they are not really connected.

The real reason why most of us don't struggle with the basics is because we are just wired that way, we grew up and were trained to live without it.

Don't get me wrong, there is nothing wrong with training ourselves and our children to naturally have no interest in being mechalel Shabbos, *halevai* we would have been trained the same way about lust as well, unfortunately it isn't spoken about.

My point is that it has nothing to do with the way we regard the issur, rather with how we were brought up and trained.

A mature person, even regarding all the *mitzvos* that are engrained in us, learns the true meaning of them and tries to do them with thinking about doing the will of Hashem, try it, one *mitzvah* because you love Hashem, something that has to do with gratitude, for example, concentrating during the *berachah* of *modim* in *shemona esrei* or during *nodeh lecha* in benching, it will change you.

Don't get beside yourself about the issur thing, really, work on being a better person in general,

on being selfless, giving to others, working on relationships and working as a life mission to rule over physical desire and all the various mitzvos and issurim will find their proper places.

As beautiful as doing mitzvos are, the real goal and ultimately our goal in this world is for our *neshamos* to rule over our *guf* (or for our intellect to rule over our desires).

I hope this is clear.

I still don't see myself doing this forever, but I guess we go one day at a time...

You got the answer there on your own. You don't have to do this forever in order to do it today.

I kind of gave in, while earlier on in my streak I might have been stronger.

Can you explain this? How do you give in or be stronger in your sleep? Unless I am missing something here, do you mean careful during the day with your thoughts?

All the best

Wilnevergiveup

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Re: Here we go...

Posted by Im Tevakshena Kakasef - 07 Oct 2020 11:17

[wilnevergiveup wrote on 07 Oct 2020 07:31:](#)

[Searchin345 wrote on 07 Oct 2020 05:19:](#)

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All the best

Wilnevergiveup

Beautiful. Clearly and intelligently written, with a good perspective.

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Re: Here we go...

Posted by Searchin345 - 13 Oct 2020 01:20

Day 85

Still just taking things day by day. One clear great thing about doing this 90 day thing is that by the end it definitely isn't as much of an "option" for me fall as much as it was before. But besides for that, my head doesn't feel much cleaner. If anything it might be the opposite since many things are still triggers. This has become such a central focus of my life that I'm not sure that it is healthy at this point. Before this, arayos wasn't such a central focus of my life. Every so often when I would get an urge, I would act out for an hour or two (maybe several days in a row) and I was good for the next few weeks until the next big urge. At this point, it is always constant urge. My mind is always on it. I feel like I'm stuck in a catch 22 and I really don't know what's the next step. This is what life is meant to be?

(Just to follow up with nevergiveup, I'm not sure that I agree with you. I would love to do any of those things, and I really think that the issur is clear to me which is why I don't. There are many halachos that I wasn't aware of when I was younger that I have come to be makpid on when I learned about them. For some reason, this one is different...

As for the being in control when sleeping, I'm not sure if everyone has it, but there is some control one can have in their dreams. If confronted with znus, do you go for it or say no? I feel like this is a big sign for where you are really holding in life. At this point, I'm not there...

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