

Living a holy life

Posted by committed_togrowth - 29 Oct 2021 04:06

Dear Chevra,

After a few months of visiting this website and quietly gaining chizuk by reading the incredible posts from this community I've decided to speak up and introduce myself. Over the past couple of years I've become religious starting from an almost entirely non-religious past. Hashem's Torah has transformed my life and imbued me with a new and deep sense of purpose, and it is my greatest desire to live each day with a sense of purpose, perfecting myself and living in connection with and recognition of Hashem. My path in Torah has led me to face the matter of shemiras habris, and in this I've encountered a great challenge. After many failed attempts at breaking free, late into this past Elul I found the resolve to pull myself out of the pit again. Since then BH I have been clean for a couple of months, but I still struggle greatly with temptation. The last time I fell I learned two things: I am not in control, and, more than anything, I want to live a life of kedusha. These two acknowledgements shocked me out of my sleep, but alarmingly I can feel over time that the clarity I gained from my last fall is diminishing. So, I've decided to jump in here to reinvigorate my journey. I look forward to growing together with each of you!

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Re: Living a holy life

Posted by Avrohom - 23 Feb 2022 04:30

Amen! Great perspective!

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Re: Living a holy life

Posted by committed_togrowth - 02 Mar 2022 01:49

Day 70 today, feels like a cool number. Thank you Hashem and the GYE community

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Re: Living a holy life

Posted by committed_togrowth - 03 Mar 2022 21:12

Hi all,

I'm considering dropping my smartphone for a flip phone and am hoping for guidance/feedback from those who have taken the plunge. This was prompted in part by some quotes by gedolim in the GYE tech talk newsletter (thanks to those who put that together) which used some **very** strong language against owning a smartphone. I currently own an iphone. The only internet capable app on it is the covenant eyes browsers with webchaver installed. To my mind it is a secure device as webchaver is a very strong deterrent for me. During my last fall in a frenzy I found every app that had unfiltered internet on my device and I deleted those. I also have a friend that does parental controls to prevent app downloading and I don't have any social media apps or accounts. Even at my worst I have not been tempted to look up shmutz on a webchaver monitored device, and this leaves me with a feeling of "where's the fire that the gedolim are so spoken out against" with regard to my smartphone as my gedarim are working well and the device seems locked down. With that being said, I'll allow for the possibility that maybe I'm not yet in touch with reality and still remain in significant danger and should therefore go for a flip phone. Can anyone offer perspective? I've made a preliminary pros and cons list here:

Pros:

- Having no web browser is safer than a filtered and monitored web browser (although see above why I don't feel very compelled by this point currently)
- I can start to chip away at my technology addiction
- I will not have loopholes to access the internet past my house wifi shutdown time (i asked someone in my community to set my wifi to shut off each night since i wanted some offline time to be present each night but I end up watching TV on my phone instead of actually going offline)
- Work related communication would be more restricted to work hours only as I would be generally unavailable unless I'm at a computer

Cons:

- Hindered work communication, we rely on slack quite a bit
- Loss of an emotional crutch through inability to watch videos (kosher content)
- Loss of whatsapp groups. Some of these are very useful, like one we use to coordinate the minyan

-Inability to share and view photos with my family. They all have iphones and share family events often through text. I like seeing their photos since I live across the country from them

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Re: Living a holy life

Posted by Vehkam - 04 Mar 2022 01:18

~~If anyone can share their experience or insight I would appreciate it.~~
Speak to your rabbis ... not everything written applies to everyone across the board. Make sure you come up with the best plan for you.

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Re: Living a holy life

Posted by committed_togrowth - 07 Mar 2022 06:35

Day 75, the few days have been pretty hard. I had a small slip today as I found an old immodest photo on my phone. I deleted it but got caught up looking at it. Going through a low energy and depressive mind state recently, and the yetzer hara is taking his chance to pounce. It's strange, it feels like the first few days of the fight when the taiva is very strong. Somehow it feels like I've forgotten the clarity and lessons I learned. The main things keeping me going are that 90 days are within reach and Purim is around the corner. I won't give up.

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Re: Living a holy life

Posted by committed_togrowth - 08 Mar 2022 01:25

Feeling much more like myself today BH. I notice there's perhaps two kinds of struggles that come up. The first I would call acute, where you see something very triggering or you are currently in a cycle of getting very triggered. This type of fight is very physiological/neurological at root and can fade into the background with time. The second is more of an existential struggle, which I think is what has come up for me recently. In this type of fight I'm not aligned with my reality, I don't understand why life is good, and I want to crumple my life up and toss it

in the trash can. I think that is exactly what pogem habris represents to me. On an inner level I know that this act is one of the biggest deepest ways I can throw my hands up and say "that's it, I'm done." Through that understanding I can also see why the yetzer hara targets this issue so heavily and also it convinces me absolutely of the emes of his existence. It's not just some arbitrary act he wants me to do. He knows what pogem habris is to me, and he wants me to just throw my hands up. In that view the appearance of taiva is sort of a way to take my own temperature and see where I'm at in terms of my alignment with avodas Hashem. It's sort of a cry out for a course correction. Anyway just some thoughts, I find it helpful to intellectualize these things.

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Re: Living a holy life

Posted by committed_togrowth - 13 Mar 2022 23:06

I want to share an amazing vort from Rabbi Moshe Weinberger with the chevra (from his series Chaburah Yosef HaTzadik, I would highly recommend listening). Bilaam ultimately failed to curse the Jews. But there's a passuk stating that Bilaam turned toward the desert, and chazal say that when he turned towards the desert he was recalling and relying upon the cheit ha eigel. His thought was, "I can't curse the Jews because Hashem is protecting them". But he reasoned that if guilt and self-resentment still lingered in the Jews' minds because of the cheit ha eigel, then he could leverage that negative mindset and induce the Jews to curse themselves. Because the Jews were already low, they were open and vulnerable to consorting with the banos Moav. And, as a result of that, they cursed themselves and brought on the plague. Hashem won't let our enemies take us down. But, if we are feeling low and think we are worthless, we just might do it ourselves. I think this highlights really strongly the danger of guilt and negative self-image. It's one of the greatest weapons we can point at ourselves. Every single one of us on here engaging with this issue cares deeply about avodas Hashem. The very notion that we are somehow down and out, or that Hashem doesn't love us is total sheker. It's an honor to be working on this issue with each of you, let's all keep going!

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Re: Living a holy life

Posted by Avrohom - 14 Mar 2022 04:15

[committed_togrowth wrote on 13 Mar 2022 23:06:](#)

I think this highlights really strongly the danger of guilt and negative self-image. It's one of the greatest weapons we can point at ourselves. Every single one of us on here engaging with this issue cares deeply about avodas Hashem. The very notion that we are somehow down and out,

or that Hashem doesn't love us is total sheker. It's an honor to be working on this issue with each of you, let's all keep going!

Beautiful post! Thank you!

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Re: Living a holy life

Posted by committed_togrowth - 14 Mar 2022 23:46

Interesting day today. Had some very strong stress-related and emotional triggers. Had only mild urges to go and use, I think definitely to an extent I've decoupled stress/emotional pain from the immediate desire to go off and look at sexual content. On the other hand, not having that cushion to fall into makes me really feel how much psychological strain I am under. Booked a therapist appointment for the first time in my life today, I suppose working on this issue has brought me into reality to a certain extent and that at least allows me the clarity to see I need help sorting things out.

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Re: Living a holy life

Posted by Bilaam Harasha to Yosef Hatzaddik - 15 Mar 2022 00:34

Wow your taking a step most aren't comfortable taking, including me, even though it would certainly help a lot. It's really inspiring to see you go ahead and do that.

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Re: Living a holy life

Posted by committed_togrowth - 15 Mar 2022 04:33

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Re: Living a holy life

Posted by committed_togrowth - 18 Mar 2022 20:27

Day 86 baruch Hashem

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Re: Living a holy life

Posted by Vehkam - 18 Mar 2022 20:32

Very exciting to set a goal and see it almost here.

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Re: Living a holy life

Posted by DavidT - 20 Mar 2022 14:32

88... 89... 90!

So many of us have found to be true, that after 90 days we will feel much freer from the desires. People have reached 90 days on GYE, and they have experienced great subsequent success in finding freedom from their struggle. But afterwards starts the "life after 90" and it's a good idea to start preparing now...

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