

Chooseurnames 90 day trip

Posted by Chooseurname - 11 Oct 2023 20:09

Hello,

I was not going to try for 90 days now. Over yamim noraim I was mekabel just an hour a day to be careful - a machsom l'aynayim. I thought that was where I was holding and it was something I could build real growth on. However, when I heard over yom tov what happened in E"Y I decided I could do more klal yisroel. So here I go for 90 days whatever it takes.

I'm going to try hard to check in daily as I think it'll be really helpful.

It's a good time to start because with all the yom tov I kinda shook loose of some unhelpful habits. On the other hand, I'm glued to my computer following the news so not so great. I wish I could backdate this streak to before Rosh Hashana but alas it was interrupted...

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Re: Chooseurnames 90 day trip

Posted by yiftach - 01 Aug 2024 22:08

Brother, I just read your last few posts. I can't find words, the truth you expose, kills.

Feeling for you! Praying for you! Pleading for you! The ????? ??? will BeH be ???? ?????. Having you in mind!

Yiftach'l

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Re: Chooseurnames 90 day trip

Posted by chosemyshem - 02 Aug 2024 14:04

[yiftach wrote on 01 Aug 2024 22:08:](#)

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Yiftach

Thank you. Couldn't have asked for a better shliach tzibur.

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Re: Chooseurnames 90 day trip
Posted by chosemyshem - 06 Aug 2024 19:16

Checking in.

Friday was rough. Had another long fall, and for various reasons, it was at a very bad time. Felt very low.

So Friday afternoon I was feeling pretty low and like I had to do something. Ended up doing something I had wanted to do for a very long time, but had always chickened out from. I emailed my Rav.

[I knew if I waited till after shabbos I'd chicken out again, so I sent it Friday - after mincha already started I frantically typed it out in my closet.]

Was very hard to do. Felt very relieved, but physically nauseous about it. I generally have been very bad about opening up about this and it took me a very long time to call anyone on GYE. This was the first non-gye person I opened up to, and I definitely couldn'tve done it without speaking to people here first.

He emailed me back and was very nice about it. (Really. Very nice. If anyone wants to borrow a Rav to come clean to they can borrow mine.) I thought I wouldn't be able to look him in the face after, but it was shockingly not embarrassing. I wonder why that is.

Concrete steps that came out: He set me up with someone in the shul who was in SA to schmooze, and encouraged me to install accountability software (such as webchaver) and is following up with me on both of those for accountability.

Other than that (or because of that) I've been clean since Friday. Still struggling with putting in work at work and not escaping to the internet (did you know Shari Redstone, the somewhat heir to the CBS Viacom fortune, is orthodox and was married to a Hasidic Rebbe? I didn't either till this morning.) Brought a mishnayos to work, but haven't opened it yet. Oh well.

Affectionately feeling

Shem

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Re: Chooseurnames 90 day trip
Posted by chaimoigen - 06 Aug 2024 20:50

Your indefatigable drive moves me and is humbling.

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Re: Chooseurnames 90 day trip
Posted by chosemyshem - 06 Aug 2024 20:59

[chaimoigen wrote on 06 Aug 2024 20:50:](#)

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This is one of the problems of an anonymous forum I guess. Anyone who knows me knows that "indefatigable" and "drive" are not words that apply to me. I'm basically a slug with legs.

I actually have trouble understanding why I keep on getting back up after a fall. It's not so much my personality.

I think there's two reasons.

1) Staying the way I am is so painful that it's even able to motivate me (life has become unmanageable etc.)

2) I just really hate losing.

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Re: Chooseurnames 90 day trip
Posted by 138eagle - 06 Aug 2024 21:47

Shem

I admire your courage to open up to your Rav!

I am quite open with my Rav about many of the issues in my life (that is a lot) but with this, I have not yet gotten there. I know that he will not judge me as he is one of the most caring, kind, and practical people on the planet.

However, I agree with ChaimOigen. I admire your ?? to keep trying. You are an inspiration to us all. Each day is a new challenge and each day is a new triumph. Keep counting the triumphs and keep inspiring us all.

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Re: Chooseurnames 90 day trip
Posted by 138eagle - 06 Aug 2024 21:51

[chosemyschem wrote on 06 Aug 2024 20:59:](#)

[chaimoigen wrote on 06 Aug 2024 20:50:](#)

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I think it is the fact that you are here and being inspired by the rest of the chevra (and possibly you feel that you are inspiring others also), that is what keeps you going.

Warning: Spoiler!

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Re: Chooseurnames 90 day trip

Posted by proudyungerman - 06 Aug 2024 23:32

[chosemyschem wrote on 06 Aug 2024 20:59:](#)

[chaimoigen wrote on 06 Aug 2024 20:50:](#)

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I'm sorry, I'm having some trouble

Warning: Spoiler!

over here.

1) Why can't you take a good compliment? Do you really think you are "a slug on legs"? If you do, doesn't that strike you as a problem on it's own?

2) So you are driven to win, but you have no drive, and are basically the worst thing since burnt

bread. Huh?

3) Do you really believe everyone who knows you thinks that lowly of you? For real? (Think wife, parents, in-laws, siblings, your Rav....

Warning: Spoiler!

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Re: Chooseurnames 90 day trip

Posted by chosemyshem - 07 Aug 2024 14:21

[proudyungerman wrote on 06 Aug 2024 23:32:](#)

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Warning: Spoiler!

Feisty. Since this thread is basically a free therapy substitute I'll address your comment in depth. (Edit: not totally sure why I'm sharing my entire life on this forum, and the comment has therefore been deleted.)

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Re: Chooseurnames 90 day trip

Posted by chosemyshem - 07 Aug 2024 17:50

[Really great post](#) from Dov on why beating yourself up for feeling lust comes from a very harmful attitude. (Meaning, it's not just that it leads to negative feelings that lead to acting out. Rather, it's a manifestation of a bad attitude towards the struggle.)

Reinforces a very important point.

Relatedly, I was thinking about ILH247's powerful share about his issue with his niece staying by him. Very brave share, and it really struck home.

Of all that I've written on GYE, I think this is the most likely to make my wife rip my head off/jump off a roof. But my wife has a niece or two whom I've certainly taken a second look at on occasion. Not that I'm fantasizing about them or flirting with them (yet?). But oh boy does it feel like a creepy and dirty lust. And I've never been able to admit that even to myself until I saw that post. It just feels so gross.

And whether or not it truly is creepy or dirty, beating myself up for feeling that way and instantly trying to repress it, isn't a solution. I've just gotta accept that I'm feeling that way, be okay with myself for feeling that way, and not act on the lust (either through surrendering it or some other method.) Expecting to not feel inappropriate things is an ego trip that expects me to be like a malach - which I'm not. That's the same (normal) ego that sometimes whispers in my ear that it's not worth getting clean unless I'll be perfect, or unless I save the world by getting clean.

Some great conversation on the recent thread about incest porn that also sparked these thoughts.

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Re: Chooseurnames 90 day trip
Posted by BenHashemBH - 07 Aug 2024 20:36

[chosemyshem wrote on 07 Aug 2024 17:50:](#)

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Thank you for the deep thoughts and reflections.

There is healthy tayva, in the right time and place, as part of intimacy. So, to brushstroke reject desire outright (if that is possible) would have ramifications in your relationship where it belongs. Hashem put the programing in there. We need to learn how to use it appropriately, not delete it.

Hashem created many things that aren't for us, like non-kosher foods. They aren't all b'etzem bad (or gross), they are just bad for us to have.

You don't want to think about it. You can't pretend you didn't think about it. You can't focus too much on not thinking about it - because then you are thinking about it. You need to have other thoughts (or methods) that you can call forward to push those unwanted thoughts away.

You are saving the world. At least the one that matters most. Your world. Your bishvili nivra olam.

I'm sure you've read this in The Battle of the Generation and that it's been shared many other times, but there is mushel of the girl who has a basket of wares. A thief knocks the basket down and starts to take the contents while she stands there in shock. One bystander yells to her "don't just stand there, grab as many as you can - what you take will be yours." It helps me a lot when I find myself losing kavana during davening, to recall this lesson. It also helps for times when we've started down a wrong path, that it's never too late to salvage what the YH hasn't taken from us yet.

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Re: Chooseurnames 90 day trip
Posted by chaimoigen - 08 Aug 2024 00:08

*There once was a turkey-slug who was a King,
Who slothfully slouched at the altar,
With a trail of slime he inched his way ever forward,
Relentless - he still doesn't falter.*

*For the throne he ascends
Is a crumbling ruin,
Entangled in wildflowers and vines,
Amidst thorns and a riot of breathtaking colors -
He climbs and continues to climb.*

*Oh, we dwell in the shadow of cavernous ruins,
Where jackals and darker beasts play,
The blueness been leeches from the Gold City's sky
To a billion numb shades of gray.*

*In that blahness that rises like bile inside,
And the brokenness swift to condemn,
The lone throne that remains at the pinnacle now,
Is the Malchus to **Choose Your Own Shem.***

*Circumstance, history, and paradise lost,
Even hope falters, in face of such strife,
In the Darkness of Galus and Churban I know:
If you are still CHOOSING : That's LIFE!*

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Re: Chooseurnames 90 day trip
Posted by chosemyshem - 08 Aug 2024 13:47

[chaimoigen wrote on 08 Aug 2024 00:08:](#)

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Beautiful! I love it.

Tempted to update my avatar to a turkey-slug king brooding in grim Carcosa.

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Re: Chooseurnames 90 day trip

Posted by chosemyshem - 08 Aug 2024 19:20

A corrupt conversation between Body and Soul

Body: What are the scariest words in the Torah?

Soul: Good question. Some may say "yadaychim damim maleiu". Some might reference this week's Haftorah: "gam ki sarbu b'tfilah aineni shomaya" or other pesukim there.

Body: I think it is "b'chol eis yihyu bgadecha levonim."

B'chol eis?? All the time?!

G-d, I'm trying to be a good Jew but I can't take a break sometime? Must I always be on, always be making the right decision? Can't I have just some time for myself??

Soul: But does G-d take a break from giving you breath? Does he leave you alone for a bit so he can relax?

Body: Ah. Way to crank up the pressure. Okay. I'll try my hardest to force myself to always do good, to always make the right decision.

Body: But one second. I've been trying to do that for a long time and it doesn't seem to work?

Soul: No worries. G-d doesn't ask the impossible. Just give it your best and smartest shot and you'll get there one day.

This whole conversation is, of course, a horrific churban.

I truly feel that the posuk of b'chol eis is the scariest posuk in the Torah. And that feeling is maybe the paradigmatic example of the churban beis hamikdash.

Derecheha darchei noam. Chiko mamtakim v'kulo machmadim. Yashkeinu minishekas pihu ki tovim dodecha miyayin.

A life of non-stop avodas hashem should be a delight. Not a pressure, not a payment we begrudgingly shell out to G-d in exchange for another day of life. Not something right-but-painful that we force ourselves to do.

How many of us have tried to go to sleep but somehow stayed up till dawn clicking, clicking, clicking, impossibly drawn after something so fake, so meaningless, and so empty? How many of us have ever meant to go to sleep but somehow stayed up till dawn lost in a sugya??

Torah, mitzvos, our relationship with Hashem. These things of endless depth and beauty should be so much more attractive than the nothingness we fill our lives with.

But we don't feel that. We feel the opposite of how we should feel.

And all we can do about our backwards life is bend down and progress like slugs. [Which is what we are supposed to be doing in our current state and for 353 days of the year we should be delighted about.] But we could've been born with wings.

We could've been born with Abaya and Rava being more fascinating than politics, sports, hock,

lashon hara, or women (choose your preferred flavor of narishkeit). Instead of every day being a painful journey of one foot forward, two steps back, we could be purely motivated to become as close to Hashem as possible. Instead of pain we could have had delight.

Ignoring the pain this distance causes Hashem (the highest level of mourning), the physical tzoros that brings (the lowest level), and the lowly state klal yisroel as a whole has descended to. The churban of the individual is so complete and so pervasive that we don't even realize how destroyed we are.

Please do me a favor. Don't say Hashem wanted us down here in the mud. Because while that's true, how can we not cry while we choke on dirt?

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