

90 Days of Teshuva: My Recovery Journey

Posted by jmyers99 - 20 Aug 2024 10:29

When I saw this forum, I was thrilled, as I want to make a big push for 90 days. I believe after 90 days of abstinence, while still difficult, it'll be much easier to heal from there, as the brain's neural pathways have begun to rewire healthy connections instead of unhealthy ones.

Of course, it's easier said than done... but I believe anything is possible, especially with lots of effort, prayer, and support from others.

I'd like to journal on a daily basis and check-in on a daily basis. I'll report on how I did the day before, how the day went, and what I want to work on today.

I'm going to commit to doing this every day here on this thread. I need to do this either way, so I figure doing it in "public" on this forum will help hold me accountable, hopefully bring me words of encouragement from others, and potentially inspire others as well.

It will also be interesting for me to read this in the future.

I don't have a format for these posts yet, but I'll probably reflect on:

- How'd I do with my abstinence, boundaries, and self-care from yesterday?
- What went well? What didn't go well? What can I thank Hashem for?
- How am I feeling today?
- What am I working on now?

Today is my second day of sobriety since my last fall. I figured out a loophole on the computer that I exploited before patching it up. BH that loophole is fixed, but there's always a way around the technological blocks. Quitting isn't as simple as find the best filter in the world. It takes lots of healing and inner work to do this, but technology filters are a big step. Having an unfiltered device is like being in yichud with a woman, something even great sages in the gemara knew was dangerous. All the more so should we, much lower than them and with access to so much more, take precautions.

I patched up the loophole in a solid way and I'm getting back on my feet.

To start this journey, I'm doing several things.

1. I'm focusing much more on self-care and self-love. Giving myself time to just "be".
Having a more balanced and healthy schedule. Focusing on my good points.
Connecting more with people. Both here and in-person
2. Going to therapy to work through some past traumas and uncover why I'm so hard on myself, so I can rewire my brain and form healthier outlets for the stress/fear instead of turning to this destructive behavior
3. Having more compassion for myself. [See my thank you and goodbye letter.](#)
4. Posting daily here to reflect on and monitor my progress, and get chizuk from all of you. (Thank you!)
5. Implement a pivot plan for moments of weakness to immediately pull myself out of the issue instead of falling.
6. Putting up guardrails around where and when I use my computer so it's harder to fall

Maybe I'm taking on more than I should at once... but I really want to grow!!

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Re: 90 Days of Teshuva: My Recovery Journey
Posted by jmyers99 - 15 Sep 2024 14:47

Hey folks, I'm on day 12 now and still doing well BH. I've been working hard on positive mindset and a solid, healthy schedule. I also found myself falling every 1-2 weeks because I had too much on my plate, was getting stressed out, and "cracked" after a week or so on average. But

after taking some things off my plate, I feel much healthier now and able to healthily manage the workload. Lastly, I don't have any unprotected devices.

I patched the last few loopholes I found as workarounds. I know this isn't a replacement for the inner work, but it surely helps.

1. Gave my laptop admin user account pw to a friend and locked myself out of it. I use a standard user, so I can't do anything to tamper with my filtering software files etc. to get around it in any way. There were a few ways I was using in the past to bypass the filter which were more advanced technical workarounds, but require the admin password, which I no longer have

2. Removed all other devices with a media player of any sort. In my opinion, for an addict, any device with a screen that can view an image or video is a concern. I realized even my waze only kosher phone could receive downloaded files and play videos, which was a loophole. Then I realized even my flip phone, which had no browser at all etc or any smart capabilities, could still play videos. I got rid of my flip phone and bought a new one that literally can only make phone calls. It can't even text. no camera, images, or videos. It's the max kosher level possible.

Since having this setup, the only way I could theoretically fall would be:

1. buying a new device from a store (this is possible at any time, but it requires so much effort to do this, there's enough of a buffer that I'm able to stop myself. I think the main risk is when you can access it easily from your device... but having to put in this much extra effort to fall is super helpful)

2. Factory reset my laptop (this is also a big lift, because I'd have to reinstall my filtering software and everything else, change my admin password and give it to my friend, etc. all of which I really don't want to do)

so BH, I'm doing well on all fronts.

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Re: 90 Days of Teshuva: My Recovery Journey
Posted by jmyers99 - 17 Sep 2024 12:30

2 weeks! BH!

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Re: 90 Days of Teshuva: My Recovery Journey
Posted by Muttel - 17 Sep 2024 12:51

You're an inspiration!

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Re: 90 Days of Teshuva: My Recovery Journey
Posted by jmyers99 - 24 Sep 2024 14:36

Hey folks, 3 weeks and still doing well, BH. Combo of really good tech filtering and also an easier schedule (less pressure on myself). Therapy, lots of positive self-talk, etc.

Feeling really positive. Thanks for the continued support. This is the best I've done in a while in recent months, and I feel like I've gotten through the initial hump (I was stuck in a 1-2 week loop) for a while.

Not out of the woods yet (will never let my guard down on this) but doing well.

Looking forward to a meaningful new year full of growth

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Re: 90 Days of Teshuva: My Recovery Journey
Posted by jmyers99 - 26 Sep 2024 12:11

BH, I'm on day 23. Almost 1/3rd of the way to 90 days. TYH!

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Re: 90 Days of Teshuva: My Recovery Journey

Posted by jmyers99 - 29 Sep 2024 14:26

Unfortunately I fell last Thursday. I'm now 3 days in... feels bad to have to restart, but I'm still in positive spirits overall. The last month was awesome. I wasn't "white knuckling", but rather living a happy life where I didn't need p*rn. I of course had some challenges, but I was able to shut the thoughts down and replace them with something positive.

In this case, it was Thurs night, and at the end of a great week. I had a few beers laying around. I normally don't drink too much, but figured "why not, I'll have a few" and after 3-4 beers, I was feeling a buzz, and that compromised my decision making ability / self-control. Then I thought "I have a bright idea, let's.." and the rest is history.

Like I said, I'm not an alcoholic, I think I just put myself in a dumb situation where I was more prone to falling. I was able to tamper with the filter, but not without my accountability partner knowing. Normally when I'm sober, that's a big deterrence for me, but in this case, I was like "whatever" and just did it anyway.

This fall was more of a fluke in my opinion. Meaning, usually I'm super stressed, anxious, lonely, etc. and then I fall. I've been feeling great over the last few weeks. I've been having great days/weeks that are super productive and I feel happy.

The win from this fall: I'm not beating myself up. That bad mindset is definitely the worst part of the whole thing. This time, I'm not beating myself up.

By the way, I just had the filter fixed today. my accountability partner wasn't able to fix it with me until today, so I had access over the weekend, including motzi shabbat when I'm likely to fall. I knew I'd be tempted sat night, but I was determined not to fall again, especially not before slichos. I would've felt like such a faker standing there asking Hashem for mercy after spitting in His face the same night.

Instead, I decided to go out for a few hours to occupy myself, and didn't touch the device at all until my friend was able to fix the filter.

I did not fall BH and am still doing well.

In summary:

- Fell after having too much alcohol in my system, but overall I've been doing great over the last month
- I'm not beating myself up about it
- I was able to hold myself back over the weekend despite having unfiltered access
- My technical loophole isn't possible without my friend finding out, which is still a strong deterrent for me in general

Looking forward to a good new year folks.

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Re: 90 Days of Teshuva: My Recovery Journey
Posted by jmyers99 - 01 Oct 2024 09:03

Day 5, still going well. Overcame a challenge today. When I fell last time, I signed out of the filter, but it notified my accountability partner. Usually that's a strong deterrent for me, but under the influence, I didn't care. Anyway, he wasn't able to reinstall/sign back in until Sunday morning. I had unfiltered access until then, but didn't fall. Usually unfiltered access, without my accountability partner being notified, is a large challenge. Specifically Sat night before selichot, I could feel myself being pulled in again. "Well, he won't know anyway," etc thoughts. I stopped, and realized I was tired/exhausted, and needed to relax. I also was not going to let this happen the night of selichot/right before Rosh Hashanah. Why am I more afraid of my friend finding out then The King? (Because according to the gemara, fearing Hashem as much as we fear man is a high level, but that's a story for another day.) I knew I'd be vulnerable during the 5 hours of downtime after shabbat and before selichot, so I immediately went to the schvitz right after shabbat ended, by myself, to clear my head. No falls that night BH.---Today I also started feeling a pull again but realized I just needed a nap. I was very tired. I laid down for a bit, rested

up, woke up, sat there and breathed for a while, then moved on. No fall. I'm working on a "passion project" now instead.---In both cases, I stopped myself going down a bad path and replaced the bad with good. I also didn't beat myself up for having bad thoughts. I just looked at it as an opportunity to grow and move on. In the past, once I started going down this path, it was very difficult to stop. Now, this happens far less frequently and I'm becoming more and more able to pull myself out. A big component of the growth is "seeing the future", i.e. knowing when I'm likely to fall, where, etc. and doing my best to protect myself from being in that situation in the first place. Thank you Hashem and for all of your help over the past year.

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Re: 90 Days of Teshuva: My Recovery Journey
Posted by Hashem Help Me - 01 Oct 2024 11:03

Super post! More important - wise and proud decisions. One comment. You started your post "Day 5, still going well." Leave out the word "still". It implies an expectation to fall. It may seem silly, but we can b'ezras Hashem train ourselves to remove all panic, all yiush, etc., with simple things like this. This in turn minimizes what used to be "overwhelming" urges. Hatzlocha. Keep inspiring all of us.

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Re: 90 Days of Teshuva: My Recovery Journey
Posted by jmyers99 - 01 Oct 2024 19:05

Thank you! ?????????? ?????????? ????????

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