

Aha!

Posted by teshuvahilaah - 24 May 2010 03:15

So, here I am on day 14 of a 90 day journey (and beyond, Be"H). At first, I didn't think I would bother to post on the 90 day forum at all. Truth be told, though I realize I have had trouble falling into less than desirable habits, I initially came to this site as a reaction to a particular wrong that I did. The trouble with lust I did not consider, and to some extent I still do not consider, too difficult to control. But I could be very wrong. Moreover, the lust could very well be a symptom of underlying problems. In the last weeks, I have come to believe this about myself. That said, in the interest of better serving my healing, I decided to take this 90 day challenge some 14 days ago and, tonight, I decided to chronicle it here. Afterall, it cannot hurt to give oneself (and others) all the help that can be had.

Nu, what interesting tales can I tell? Tips on this road of recovery? I am afraid I don't have anything too exciting to tell. The first week, I was consumed with the pain of my past action. Because of this, it wasn't hard to do good. Lately, I find myself doing my best to keep my vision aimed low as I walk through the streets. I find myself often uttering the words, Shmiras Ainayim, as a reminder. In the city where I live, a major, metropolitan city, the women are often practically naked. And the hot weather does not help this time of year. All I do is try to do my part.

So, that is it for now. A gut voch to all and hatzlocha on this most holy of journies.

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Re: Aha!

Posted by jamies - 24 May 2010 08:41

welcom friend!!!

as dov says - take one day at a time...

welcome to your new community . . .

chazak chazak vnetichazek - this forum will definatly only bring greater strength to your journey to recovery!

HATZLOCHA!!!

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Re: Aha!

Posted by silentbattle - 24 May 2010 14:18

Glad to hear about your journey...please let us know how things are going, how you're feeling about all this, etc...

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Re: Aha!

Posted by teshuvahilaah - 25 May 2010 21:31

16 days. So far, so good.

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Re: Aha!

Posted by silentbattle - 26 May 2010 00:31

That's amazing - it truly is!

Can you share what works for you - that way I (and maybe others) can gain from it?

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Re: Aha!

Posted by teshuvahilaah - 26 May 2010 02:48

Hi, there. Thank you for the encouragement. It is always appreciated.

Right now, I am practicing shmiras ainayim with a few unfortunate slips. I characterize them as

slips because they are not in keeping with the program (eg., I will notice a woman occasionally for something other than her beauty, hence not looking away), however, they are not slips in the sense of lusting - I make it a point to look away from any lust leading situations. My goal is to practice shmiras ainayim all of the time, not just during a recognizably dangerous situation. Afterall, Chazal instituted this practice with the same wisdom as so many other fences - if one considers one fence holy, let him consider this fence holy, too.

The above is to clarify where I hold on the bar (and where I aim to hold). As far as p____ & m____, these are strictly off the table, completely.

I have had a few funny situations. I was on a bus, seated in the back, forward facing. In walks a lady, also sits in the back, on a seat that faces to the side. She is right in front of me, towards my right, and she decides to twist so as to face me. She wasn't dressed very modestly. All I could think is, "Oy, how am I going to read this Sefer with this ervah sitting so close?". I managed. Just looked down and towards my left for awhile. When she left I got back to reading. It's a big city, what can you do?

We are all in this to become better people and it seems to me that we can all become better people. It isn't an easy road but it is not an impossible road, either. Moreover, we have help from the Heavens every day, every moment. And we should take it that way, one day at a time, even one moment at a time. The battle will most certainly turn in our favor and we will regain our self-respect. I feel that such a reward is priceless; G-d help us to treasure it.

Hatzlocha rabbah to everyone here. I am off to make myself a late meal. How many times have I heard my Rov state that we nourish ourselves in order to strengthen ourselves for our doing of mitzvos? Many times. And to that I say, Let's eat!!

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Re: Aha!

Posted by silentbattle - 26 May 2010 03:16

I like. What you say rings very true. If I could do even part of what you say, I'd be happy!

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Re: Aha!

Posted by teshuvahilaah - 01 Jun 2010 06:42

I am either up to day 23 or 24, not too sure. Just living day by day.

The biggest news I have is that I am starting to be able to live with myself despite the errors of my past. Things have been looking up. All I can really do is thank Hashem.

Life is a strange thing. It truly is completely in the hands of G-d. A few weeks ago I was on the brink of leaving this earth. Today, I am quick to wish to preserve my life. A few weeks ago, I had no idea what shame could really be. Today, I have been so burdened with shame that I found the only source of self-worth I could find was directly from G-d. It has been a strange and rocky, painful and pleasing road. It is all really beyond me. Again, all I can do is thank G-d.

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Re: Aha!

Posted by briut - 01 Jun 2010 11:20

[teshuvahilaah wrote on 01 Jun 2010 06:42:](#)

A few weeks ago, I had no idea what shame could really be. Today, I have been so burdened with shame that I found the only source of self-worth I could find was directly from G-d.

Congrats on your clean streak! Your note about shame really hit home.

I remember hitting one big birthday and saying how amazingly grateful I felt that "I had no regrets about anything in my life; it was all for a reason and turned out okay and everything." And now, working on moving beyond some of my se*xual "issues" of the past, I have waves of regret that could knock down a mountain. Funny how life changes. And still, I suppose I even welcome the shame and particularly the cleansed feeling that comes from processing it all and not leaving it to hang 'in the closet' for the rest of my life.

Thanks for that reminder.

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Re: Aha!

Posted by muststopnow - 01 Jun 2010 13:53

[teshuvahilaah wrote on 01 Jun 2010 06:42:](#)

I found the only source of self-worth I could find was directly from G-d.

hi there!

i must say that i find these words to be truly deep and meaningful. when you reach rock - bottom, i guess there is point where all that is left is G-od's will for us to be in this world and do good. all that is left is our neshama which is never touched and damaged by our external actions. all that is left is the ??? ?????, the devine piece within us, keeping us going...

really powerful stuff buddy.

thanks,

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Re: Aha!

Posted by bardichev - 01 Jun 2010 14:09

Keep on trucking!!

Bards

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Re: Aha!

Posted by teshuvahilaah - 11 Jun 2010 01:47

Friends, today I am priveleged to witness the winding down of day 32. Soon, with night approaching, I will be greeting day 33, be'ezras Hashem.

I have so far steered completely away from p__ & m__. I have also been practicing a hit or miss style of shmiras ainayim. Most of the time, I am shomer. At othertimes, I'll notice. Thankfully, lust is not an issue and I haven't entertained it with my eyes or mind. All in all it's been a very useful experience. My hope is that things progress, more and more and more.

How incredible is this site? It is beyond description. I thank all of you for simply being here. A special thank you goes to the administrators of this site, all those who provide so much good to every visitor on this site. People come here to heal. They come here to beg G-d for mercy. To beg G-d for help. They come here to cry out from deep within, beginning an amazing return to life. This is a remarkably holy place.

A funny thing happened to me today. I was reading Tikkun HaKlali on the bus ride home. I got off two stops past my stop; it was the only way to wrap up my reading without interruption. As I walked off the bus, I felt different. I felt better. Not a "joyous" better, but a "not under the gun" better. It just felt like a normal day, my burdens not weighing me down. I thought, Hey! Where is my burden? I know it's here some place! I looked for it but couldn't find it. This got me a little bothered. This burden has faithfully assailed me daily for the last six weeks (give or take a day or two). Where did it go? I quickly recalled my error, the source of my shame and guilt... but the pain wasn't there. This actually bothered me. It kind of got me mad. I thought, Hey!! Where's my pain?!? I wasn't ready to feel this way.

I have felt like this before, but it always comes with sufficient joy to compensate for the hollowness of my interior pain. And, in the past, the feelings would come and go, both the elated good as well as the biting bad. But today it was different. The pain was absent and there was no

accompanying feeling of joy. It was just me being me, just "normal".

I don't know what to make of it. I am not complaining, I am simply sharing. I have noticed that, with the passing of days, the lows are not as low and the highs (which I believe would compensate for the lows) are not as high. I believe I am healing. I have not forgotten my past, however, I no longer feel its sting. Be'ezras Hashem that things will continue well.

I had to accept myself and my actions. It wasn't and hasn't been easy. I cringe at the thought. Still, I realize lust is a madness. As Chazal teach, Man does not sin except that a spirit of madness overcomes him. Guys, take care of your fences. They're there for a reason. The actions I took I never dreamed I would ever take. Ever. But life has a way of humbling a man. Today, I can only thank G-d as He takes me on this path of life. And who knows how rich life will be? I've learned that one has to embrace where it is they are and, from there, reach out appropriately to G-d. This leads to life. We have to trust G-d that this path is for our good.

You'd think one would trust G-d on the path of life, right? Not if one has been so broken by shame and guilt that one doesn't see a future. Can you imagine refusing the good because one deems themselves just too filthy? But that was my position, and only with great trepidation did I move forward. But G-d is very kind.

I read above something Briut posted, about once upon a time when a more youthful birthday of his arrived, how he thought, Everything is perfect! Everything I've lived up to this point has contributed to who I am, something I am most satisfied with. That was a paraphrase, but I believe I captured the sentiment. I've been there, too. Possibly many of us have, as well. Usually, these thoughts come in our youth, when the world is something wide open to our yearnings for exploration and our assessment of ourselves is full of a confidence that we are most prepared to journey forth, equipped as we are with the finest regalia of self-interest. That was then. Ill founded as it was, the feeling was nevertheless a good feeling. Even then, our failures at that point barely cast a speck of a shadow on the vastness of beauty before us and our unique ability to conquer it. Fast forward to today. Will we feel this way again? I have a feeling we will. The worlds of kedusha are vast before us if we but take a look. And our unique ability to participate therein with dignity is undeniable, if we but take a look. But how can we see such things? Where is this beautiful perspective hidden? It is tucked away with G-d. Call me crazy, but I believe that if we yearn for Him these visions of holiness will open up to us and we will see with innocence again.

Signing off for now, Good Shabbos.

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Re: Aha!

Posted by briut - 11 Jun 2010 02:34

Beautiful post. Thanks for the inspiration.

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Re: Aha!

Posted by Ineedhelp!! - 11 Jun 2010 02:35

Wow truly a beautifully written and inspiring post TH. Keep it up. You are getting so much closer to true freedom every day.

-Yiddle

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Re: Aha!

Posted by muststopnow - 13 Jun 2010 20:46

wow.

i remember asking mself if i will ever be able to retrurn to the innocence of my youth.

i've yet to feel the purity you are describing, as i have not made it past a week so far, but your words are comforting and give me hope that a day will come where i will look up to G-d and see kedusha, purity and advancement, and not only have my sins before my eyes.

thank you.

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