

Thank you Hashem

Posted by ur-a-jew - 07 Sep 2010 17:24

Ahh what a feeling. 90 days. Thank you Hashem for sending me here and walking me along, to Guard for setting up the site and to all the wonderful members for giving me chizuk and advice all the way. I started writing this post after just being on the site for two weeks but it somehow got deleted and then I kept pushing it off. I figured once I got 90 days I would just write a whole long megilla as to what the GYE community means to me.

1. I once met a chasuva balabus who works with at-risk kids and he told me over a conversation he once had around Yom Kippur with one of these kids. He was telling the kid that on Yom Kippur we can do teshuva and our aveiros become zechuyos. The kid turns to him and says you explain to me how the XXX movie I just watched will be a zechus. The balabus turns to me and says I didn't know what to say but Hashem put the following in my mind which I told the kid. He said, I'll tell you. Because you're going to resole to change and you're going to become better and work on raising a jewsih family and you're going to meet a kid like you where who feels they were hopeless. At that point you'll tell the kid, never lose hope, you can never sink too low. I also saw the shmutz that you saw, I saw the same XXX movies, but look I was able to turn around. At that point says the balabus you'll understand how that XXX movie can be a zechus. The message hit home and the kid went on to change. All I can say is that there are a lot of interesting and unique "zechusim" on this site.

2. I've learned how to grow in Ahavas Yisroel. Just like the addiction does not discriminate neither does the site. All walks of yiddishkeit are here and the camaraderie that is displayed is trully remarkable.

3. My tefillos have improved. There are a lot of people to thank for this. Most promenantly is Dov who has encouraged me to talk to Hashem on a regular basis. Just two days ago, Jooboy wrote me something which gave me a tefilah that I now add. Hashem give me the ability to place my trust and my dependance only in You and not in any human including my wife.

4. I realize I am not alone.

5. I have hope. In the back of my mind I also had this fear that I had completely ruined my chances to be mekabel pnei moshiach and for olam haba based on my actions. Would I ever really be able to do teshuva. The site tells me that although it is hard work (as could be expected given the reward) teshuva is possible. It really is possible to stop.

6. The 12 Steps. In the past as part of my efforts to stop. I had always looked into ways to online SA meetings. It never worked in large part because I could not relate to any of the people that were members. Here I feel that I am amidst family since we are all bnei av echad. B"H I am making my way through the steps.

7. The knowledge that sex is optional. This is a hard one. But I am grateful for the knowledge and one of these years I hope to be truly able to implement it in my life.

8. Making shemiras eynayim part of my conscience. I can proudly say that for the past 90 days I have not picked up a New York Post or a New York or New Yorker magazine, all of which were part of my daily or weekly routine since they are readily available in my office. I have come to realize I don't need them and the potential triggers they bring with them.

9. A filter. After years of just saying I need one I know have one both in the office and at home.

10. No facebook. This was probably my biggest michshal in the past year. What a wonderful feeling when I click on a link that directs me to facebook and K-9 comes up to block it.

11. No youtube. Another source of anguish consumed by the canines.

12. A garden of peace. I found this book here. And anyone who has read it knows what I mean. Anyone who hasn't, what are you waiting for.

13. A better marriage. When I don't have all the baggage, things necessarily are better.

14. The daily chizuk emails, all three of them. Even if I don't always get to read them. There is a certain comfort knowing that they are there just for the looking. There is a noticeable absence when Guard is away.

15. The GYE Handbooks.

16. Virtual meetings.

17. Google chat to know that someone can check on me and the ability to offer chizzuk to others.

18. Rather than mention names and mistakenly leave someone out. I appreciate everyone who has helped me along this journey. You all know who you are. I hope to continue with you all to the next level.

My list can go on and on (and I hope to continue it but I got to work a little today). My tefillah to Hashem is that I recognize that this first 90 days is just a stepping stone along the path and that I merit to continue to stay sober day by day, and that I not forget that I was never able to do this alone so I should never think of moving away from the site and the wonderful people that I have met and continue to meet here.

Ksiva V'Chasima Tova to all.

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Re: Thank you Hashem
Posted by KiviYVY - 23 Nov 2010 14:50

Thanks UAJ - Telling stories like that helps us all realize that we're always in the soothing presence of HKB"H. We're safe.

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Re: Thank you Hashem
Posted by Dov - 25 Nov 2010 06:17

I love the stuff on this thread above. Every post is beautiful.

Now about the 200 chests:

Personally, sometimes (just out of self-respect....ok, pride) I try to fight it and occasionally I succeed at distracting myself with more important stuff, like...anything else.

Of course, I am an addict and there are times that I cannot do that, at all. You seem to be describing one of those times. Sometimes it just seems like lust is slapping me senseless. Yup. Admittedly, that is usually a sign that something is wrong with me, like way too little sleep, I forgot to eat breakfast (and had just a candy bar for lunch, R"l), or that I am cooking with some resentment that I'd rather nurture than face.

But maybe not. My sponsor used to remind me that deep cheshboinos are not necessary for me to '*understand why*' I am lusting. Sometimes they are just another lust - a lust to maintain an appearance to myself that I am 'in control'...because, "I understand exactly what is wrong with me, don't I?" Well, that is a lust, too. It's part of my disease and was the regimen I used before, when my life was pathetic and disgusting. It gets me nowhere, really.

It's all self-worship and an excuse to leave G-d out, I say.

So instead, I just shrug my shoulders, chuckle at how pathetically crazy I am - it's like a guy with a bad gland, or something, that just leaks green slime all over and there is nothing he can do to stop it. I just am nutty about chests sometimes. They get my attention simply *because I am an addict and that is exactly what addicts do!*

Once I admit that, there is only one escape route left: Surrender. Not trying to *partially* surrender, but trying to completely give up and admit to myself, to Hashem, and to another human being that I need a Power greater than myself in order to make it through this thing sane, useful, and not miserable. Maybe even happy, like a normal person should be (I guess).

I make a call to another addict and admit it. If he advises me and warns me of the great aveiro of lusting or of seeing women, then I find *someone else* to call next time. What I need then is for another addict to relate and admit his own lack of power to control and use lust. Not that he mustn't because it is ossur - but that he is just completely unable to *because he is just unable to!* It ruins him, ruins his day, makes him crazy, and he just cannot live real life, if he partakes. So he asks G-d along with me, to save us from the tyranny of lust.

Then I remember that mesameach choson v'kallah is why I am there, and get back to 'work'!

I know it is working if the experience is completely different one. And if I have trouble again, I do it all over again.

It's a miracle, cuz we need it.

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Re: Thank you Hashem
Posted by frumfiend - 25 Nov 2010 14:39

Dov that was pure gold!

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Re: Thank you Hashem
Posted by kutan - 25 Nov 2010 15:41

Thank you URAJ and friends for this wonderful thread.

Its like looking into a mirror!

I'd love to comment, but

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Re: Thank you Hashem
Posted by ur-a-jew - 25 Nov 2010 16:58

Thanks Dov. Its always a pleasure to read what you write.

I have a lot to write, but I told myself that I would use the day off to catch up on personal business. But I have to get down a least some of it while it's still fresh in my mind. This morning I listened in to my wife's OA call. Two observations. Many of us (myself included) sometimes have our doubts whether we are addicts (or maybe its not really "doubts" but simply pride). Listening in to others describe a different type of addiction, in this case a food addiction, made it very clear to me that I was an addict. I heard how someone can obsess over food the same way I obsess over lust. And how they try to give it up the same way I try to give up lust. The speaker was describing how one time she started eating leftovers from her neighbor's garbage that she had noticed was in there (the only reason she stopped is because her neighbor saw her in the act). The point is to a non-food addict even to a lust addict you can think to yourself "how can she do something like that?" Doesn't she have any self-respect? But, if I take a step back and look at myself, am I really any different. When I "eat" with my eyes from someone else's garbage that they posted on the internet. I am sure that to my wife, she would say "how can he do something like that?" Another time she described he she would get into accidents as a food addict for example we she was reaching down to get that "last chip" which dropped on the floor despite the fact that she had already consumed a whole bag. While she was bending down she rear-ended someone. And my wife can never understand how sometimes I can just keep "nosh" or cake in my office and not eat it. But we will do the same thing with porn. B"H it has never happened to me. I've have heard from a number of people how they got into car accidents because they were so busy trying to get another look at someone they had noticed on the road, or were just exhausted from their pursuit of lust.

The second thing I took from the call was when the speaker described how as part of step-one a food addict has to completely give up triggering foods. 100%. There are no exceptions. Someone asked well sometimes I give up triggering foods but then I find myself looking for my "fix" from munching on carrots. Now carrots are not a triggering food for me. To which the speaker responded that not only do we have to give up "triggering foods" but "triggering behaviors." What I took from that is that it is not enough to give up porn, and lust but I have to give up my other behaviors, that may otherwise be legitimate but not when I use them as a way to medicate myself.

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Re: Thank you Hashem
Posted by KiviYVY - 25 Nov 2010 17:18

Dov - thank you. I really needed that peak behind the scenes of this addiction. It really helped solidify a few things.

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Re: Thank you Hashem
Posted by bardichev - 25 Nov 2010 19:57

Rabbotai (ok rabboi-say)

U gotta listen to rebbereber=DOV

He is a gadol

(Yeah his posts are too long and dovish)

What my rebbe is saying is.. Is..

We are taught to think we are fantasticterrifficreatecellentperfect

We just gotta me "moidah" were not

Zehu!

It makes no freakin difference why I get freakin triggerred

Ok!

Zehu!

Do u know why the engine excellerates when u hit the gas pedal. Or how a ball point pen works??

Who cares

It just works that way

Dov said it perfect

I have a swollen gland

Poifect

Work with it

Zehu

Move on

Keep on dancing

Keep on trucking

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Re: Thank you Hashem
Posted by ZemirosShabbos - 25 Nov 2010 20:33

thank you Bardy for breaking it down for us!

now my gland hurts...

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Re: Thank you Hashem

Posted by ur-a-jew - 28 Nov 2010 15:49

[ur-a-jew wrote on 17 Nov 2010 15:28:](#)

2. Please help me improve way way further and come to appreciate that:

b. Shabbos is a day of growth and coming closer to You and to others not simply a nice time to have sex.

This past Shabbos Hashem really showed me his Hasgacha Pratis with respect to this. As should be obvious from the above quote when my wife is muttar being with my wife on Friday night is a big deal to me. This Friday night was no different. We had a bris early Friday morning so I knew my wife was tired. But I was hoping that the nap she took when I went to Shul had offset it. When we were ready to go upstairs she was still in slow motion so I sat down and picked up the Family First which had a question from a woman regarding what to do about her friends whose husband was at best clueless and oblivious regarding how to treat his wife and at worst just plain abusive. One of the responses included the quote regarding the Alter Slabodka and how he treated his wife (I quoted it on the Sholom Bayis thread). It was after I read that that we went up. Once upstairs my wife said she needed a pass tonight since she just wasn't up to it. I responded that having just read the article how could I refuse. So we went to sleep, and unlike in the past I went with a smile. But I didn't sleep as well as a result. Since at least subconsciously I wanted and was hoping for sex. The next morning there was a simcha in town and I had decided that I was not going to go for davening I would go to my regular shul, hear the Rov's drasha and go after to the Kiddush. I had somelingering doubts whether that was the right move.

As I walked to Shul in the morning I thought to myself it's okay that I didn't have sex last night. But Shabbos is just better when I do. I then thought to myself about the story I told my kids from the Meoros HaShabbos (which if you want to learn Hilchos Shabbos with your kids is a great sefer). The story was as follows:

One Friday night, the Baal Shem Tov sent his students to observe an apparently "simple" Jew, so that they could learn from him what "oneg Shabbos" really means. The students followed the man home from shul to a dilapidated shack. When he entered the hovel he greeted his wife with a joous "Gut Shabbos" and sand "Sholom Aleichem" As he had no wine to make kiddush on, he made kiddush on two small loaves of poor, black bread. Instead of fish, his wife served

him a meager portion of beans. Instead of soup, he got more beans. And again some more "instead of meat. As he ate he did not stop praising his wife for the great "delicacies" she had prepared. His happiness seemed to know no bounds and he sang and said divrei torah throughout the meal. After bentching he was so overcome with joy and appreciation to Hashem that he got up and began dancing around the table in honor of the holy Shabbos. When the Ball Shem Tov's students returned he told them that he wanted them to see real "oneg shabbos" --- delighting over Shabbos itself, not just over its fancy foods.

I thought to myself if only I could figure out how to do that. I wouldn't have such a hard time with the wife issue. I came to shul. After davening, the Rov rather than speak about this week's parsha continued with the subject he had started speaking about last week.

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which the Medrash learns is connected to

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In other words Yaakov has no need to chase after the things the Goyim do, since we are content with what we have. Said the Rav it all sounds nice but what practical application does it have to us. He then went into describe three areas: Shabbos, Tefillah and Torah. His discussion on Shabbos was all about what I had been thinking about on the way to shul.

He brought down the Rashi from Beraishis. What was the world missing menucha. Comes Shabbos and comes menucha. He asked why if the world was missing Menucha Hashem didn't just create menucha. To answer we have to understand what Menucha is. Menucha is not simply sitting on the couch. Menucha is Olam Haba. What Rashi is saying is that the this world was missing Olam Haba. Hashem created Shabbos to give us a taste of Olam Haba. Similarly, the Medrash says that Shabbos came to Hashem complaining every day has a pair I don't have one. The Rov explained what Shabbos was saying is that all six days have a connection to this world. I have no connection to this world. Answered Hashem I have a good match for you. Bnei Yisroel also have no connection with this world. This is the opportunity that Shabbos presents. The Rov also suggested learning Reb Shimshon Pincus's sefer Nefesh Shimson on Shabbos to bolster the inyun and appreciation of Shabbos.

I was just sort of amazed listening. Here I had wanted to work on this inyun. And Hashem was

spoonfeeding it to me. I felt like He had the Rov write a drasha just for me.

Remarkably, despite this spoonfeeding. When it came Motzei Shabbos and my wife was still not in the mood it was not any easier to accept. But I guess that's why I'm here in the first place.

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Re: Thank you Hashem

Posted by Dov - 01 Dec 2010 10:31

sometimes the only way my heart can accept this kind of thing is through remembering that my going to sleep is doing the best I can for my wife. It is 'taking the actions of love', because the patience I have in this area davka, may be the only way I can actually give her the security she desperately needs. Since learning of my addiction, she is fearful that behind all sexuality with me, lies my addiction - the pain of knowing she is not loved by me, but just another sex object, like a dirty magazine...no? To her, that's dead, she is a nothing - she *gives* nothing, really, but is actually only being *taken* from. It'd be an act of **taking** from her, cuz what's in my heart then is not love at all, but just pure lust!

In her heart, I guess every woman knows this. Even for the one who sees giving sex to her husband as some sort of mitzvah because she thinks it helps him with his yetzer hora...still it is disgusting and debasing to her to realize that sof-sof she is serving as a shmoteh - an object for this man, her husband. Dress it up as 'loving' me...*at best, she is allowing herself to be **taken from**, and not really **giving** anything to me.* Rav Dessler makes this distinction clear in kuntress haChessed.

For a sexaholic, sex **must** be *an act of giving* to his wife. Maybe not every time and certainly not *only* or *perfectly* giving...but it's gotta be in there *somewhere*. Otherwise, the act smells too much of the 'old way', to me and to her. Dress it up with any 'mitzvah' or l'Shem Shomayim we'd like, it's still sick - for a sexaholic. It might be 100% fine for a normal yid - but it's unacceptable for a proven lust addict like me.

My patience with my wife and with my lust tonight, is loving my wife and myself. It's another little nail in coffin I bury my addict in. It's the greatest investment I could possibly make in my marriage, my happiness, and my freedom from lust. And we know it when we do it. It increases my freedom from lust.

A non-addict could *never* understand this. So also, any guy who is white-knuckling, or holding his breath and waiting 'one more day at a time'...till he eventually explodes. A fellow working a twisted program like that is in darkness. He cannot yet fathom that there is *any* alternative to what he is doing. He has not yet heard of the sweet word, 'surrender'.

I ask Hashem to help me remember that sex, for tonight, is optional. That I am a loving being before I am a sexual being. That I really do want to be one who loves his wife, and himself - *mischased im ishto, umischased im gufo/atzmo*. This is good for me, painful as it feels at times. It's delicious to my marriage and my sanity and my future.

Another weird paradox - kind of selfish *in* the loving. But that is the attitude I need. I need to give up the chivalry or 'perfect *tzidkus*', too, and just do the best I can and see it that way: the very best an ill man such as myself can possibly do.

I'm the oni who brings the kemach cuz he can't even afford the birds to make my chatas...echad hamarbeh v'echad hamam'it - *ubilvad sheyichaven libo laShomayim*.

I **must** see this simple act and surrender, as a '*shorr parr*' for Hashem, or else I am dead. Hashem surely sees it that way, cuz He knows it's the best I can do. When I feel the love inside me - even though I may be quietly in tears that night laying beside my sleeping wife...I recognize it as a miracle and am grateful. It hurts, but it is truly the very best case scenario. An opportunity for me to love, for a change. Amazing.

Do you hear me?

You are saying nothing different, UAJ, this is just a different framing of it.

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Re: Thank you Hashem

Posted by ur-a-jew - 03 Dec 2010 05:03

Thanks Dov, I hear you loud and clear (although truth be told by brain has worked past the lshem shomyim reason to the "we" just need it to destress at the end of long week). But I get your point nonetheless.

This week is starting to hit me. Between being absorbed in my selfish neediness combined with just plain old physical exhaustion I find myself noticing more on the street. My tefillah to Hashem is that I get back on track tomorrow. Thank you for keeping me sober for another day.

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Re: Thank you Hashem
Posted by bardichev - 03 Dec 2010 08:42

Rebbereber =DOV

Explained it so well

Off pitz pitzlach

What needs to be explained?

Ok we'll sum it up

What do I surrender?

My selfish wants no matter what package I pack it in

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Re: Thank you Hashem
Posted by ur-a-jew - 06 Dec 2010 18:56

Thank You Hashem for giving me an additional 90 days of sobriety. My tefillah to you is that this continue for today, and the rest of my life.

It may be that since I first started pursuing lust in my early teens and now nearly 30 years later that I have gone more than 6 months without porn or MZL. But it is the first time that I am conscious of the fact and it feels great. Moreover, I can happily say that it has also been at least 6 months since I've picked up (I use that word carefully since I have looked at some of the covers when I saw there was no improper pictures) a New York Post (I may sometimes be behind in the news but its no great loss); 6 months since I read through the New Yorker or New York magazine which inevitably had something improper to read or look at; 6 months since I've been on Facebook; 6 months since I've looked at any improper video on Youtube (I think I may have been on the site several times but it was limited since my computers now block it out); 6 months of working on my marriage; and 6 months during which I have been working on, even if at times I have been unsuccessful, the issue of lust in the bedroom. The list goes on and on and B'ezras Hashem will continue to grow.

This morning as I was driving to shul, I noticed in cupholder a cup with the ripped up pages from a basketball program. My son had gone to the game and when we picked him up he was holding the program. I started leafing through and noticed that there was a page with the cheerleaders or whatever they call them in basketball. I put it down. When my other son wanted to look at it. I gave it to my wife to first censor. She pulled out two pages and ripped them up and put them in the cup. So as I'm driving I notice these shreds and for a second a flash went across my brain saying if you wanted you probably can put them back together. I had no real thought of doing it. But I was very grateful for the reminder from Hashem saying: Yes it's six months, congratulations. But don't for a minute think that your cured. In three seconds you can be back doing the same old stuff. So, I'm grateful for the six months, but looking forward to being sober until the end of today as well.

I would be remiss if I didn't continue to thank (and I should on a daily basis) Guard for the wonderful site, Dov for guiding me through the 12 steps and my defacto partners Stuart and AndrewSh who check on me on nearly a daily basis, and to all the other wonderful members of this site who are helping me enjoy life. May you all have much brocho in everything you do and continued sobriety in all aspects of your life.

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Re: Thank you Hashem
Posted by Yosef Hatzadik - 06 Dec 2010 19:01

In a word:

GEVALDIGGG!!!!

May we all reach your level!

(I know the feeling already, Boruch Hashem, but on a lesser plane.)

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