

Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count

Posted by Eye.nonymous - 13 Jul 2009 21:08

I'm new to this forum, but not new to this struggle. I signed up to the weekly E-mail lists a few months ago. I often just glance at them, as I'm trying not to spend so much time reading E-mails. But, even with this, I have gotten chizuk through the themes that keep repeating themselves.

I grew up secular, but did Teshuva in college--I came to Yeshiva in Israel and never left. Now I'm married with five children (our oldest is eight and our youngest is a month old).

I was in the habit of staring at girls, I remember even in nursery school. I just liked the way they looked. Things got worse when I was 10 or 11. My sisters had a "facts of life" book with indecent pictures and crooked ideas, and I found it. It described Mast... as a fun thing to do, and so I followed the instructions. I've been stuck ever since.

I was a member of a shul youth group around the age of my bar-mitzvah. The youth group leader gained my trust very early on, and I could discuss anything with him. Luckily, I learned early on that mast... is wrong. I've been fighting it ever since, sometimes more successfully and sometimes less so. I think now I go two or three months clean, and then I tend to trip up a few times close together. I always feel that the yeitzer hara tricked me, and somehow it's strategy was different than last time. Also, I view it as tripping up for one "phase," instead of multiple times. So, I manage not to get too depressed about it, and can pick myself up again pretty quickly.

I would like to be able to stop altogether. But, I am more concerned with controlling my eyes. I feel that it is impossible to walk down the street without taking a look at every woman along the way. I think the trickiest part is that, in my neighborhood, everyone is dressed so tznius that it's hard to feel that I'm really doing anything wrong.

Besides that, I slip up every once in a while with the internet--probably a few times a year. But then, I feel that I was somehow outsmarted again by my Yeitzer. I wasn't looking for indecent pictures... I was just curious about such-and-such an actress... I wasn't expecting to find such indecent pictures...

I see the progress is still very slow on my own, and that's why I decided to become more involved in this forum.

But, I find this is also a challenge. I think my own situation is rather mild, and I find that by seeing other people's stories which are more involved than my own, I end up getting thoughts instead of getting rid of them. Any advice on this point would also be helpful. Thanks.

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count
Posted by Blind Beggar - 31 May 2011 09:42

Eye.nonymous, I went to my first face-to-face SA meeting 3 months ago and I also was not afraid of anything because of the GYE get together that you organized in your succah, (and because of Silent Battle's one year sobriety party) so you see Hashem pays back middo keneged middo.

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count
Posted by Yosef Hatzadik - 31 May 2011 15:54

I have not attended an SA meeting yet, but I feel the same way after having met other great GYE guys!

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count
Posted by ZemirosShabbos - 31 May 2011 16:29

that's great, Eye!

good going, bravo, kudos, mabrook, be'hatzlacha

happy for you

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count

Posted by Eye.nonymous - 01 Jun 2011 18:20

I had a strange experience learning Gemara today, which I'm sure contains a deep lesson for all of life.

I was reviewing something I had learned a while ago, and I found it very confusing and I couldn't make any sense of it. I was getting frustrated because I know I had learned it before and the pieces fell together rather smoothly.

THEN, I figured out the gemara again. BUT, I realized why it was confusing--NOT because I had understood it worse than before, BUT because I had actually understood it better! A couple of pieces didn't fit in, because I understood them BETTER and realized a few problems with them.

So, perhaps when we go through those dark times in life, when everything seems confusing, it's not a sign that we're confused; it could be a sign that we have become more aware, that we have reached a higher level of understanding. It's not a reason to feel bad about ourselves, it's a reason to feel good!

--Eye.

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count

Posted by an honest mouse - 01 Jun 2011 22:11

beautiful insight eye thanks!

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count

Posted by Dov - 01 Jun 2011 23:29

Emess!!

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count

Posted by Eye.nonymous - 02 Jun 2011 19:59

I have a major insight to write about. At first, I thought it was a sudden breakthrough. But, upon further thought, I think it is the cumulative effect of a lot of different things I have been trying to do, applying the 12-step principles to my life. I'll start with the background information.

BACKGROUND INFO

FAMILY RELATIONSHIP; NEW SENSE OF PEACE

My relationship with my nuclear family has been difficult and strained for most of my life. I just recently came to accept that, they have limitations. I can have a relationship with them, but it will have to be a limited one. I let go of my expectations.

REACHING OUT TO MAKE AMMENDS WITH MY BROTHER

My brother recently intermarried and I did a lot of things to try and influence him, which only put more strain on our already limited relationship. Following the advice of someone from DC's group, I called a Rav—but not one that I'm in close contact with now. It was a Rav from memory lane, who was instrumental in my becoming religious, and knows my family a bit and is much more familiar with the situation. I took his advice and poured it into an amends letter to my brother, which I just mailed off.

COMING TO TERMS WITH MESSED UP HOUSE WORK

We had some house work done a while back that was really messed up. To fix up the problem is going to be rather expensive. I have been unsure how to deal with the original contractor. Can I take him to beis din? Will I have to take him to court? Then, I realized, there were mistakes and misunderstandings on both sides. I would really be happy if he would forgive an outstanding payment, and I'll cover the rest of the expenses. Perhaps I could drag some of the cost out of him, BUT I WOULDN'T BE AT PEACE with such a decision. I tried to call him and get things settled, but he was out of town, returning in a couple of days. This has been a source of confusion and frustration for almost two years now. I feel I can finally put it behind me.

HUMILITY; ADMITTING MY WEAKNESSES

Finally, on DC's call, I asked about something really basic that I'm still struggling with. I feel silly, as a veteran, as if I'm supposed to be above it already. But I humbled myself and asked for guidance. And I think THIS, after everything else, was the finally pulling a drain plug, and cleared the way for what comes next:

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count

Posted by Eye.nonymous - 02 Jun 2011 20:00

THE INSIGHT

SEEMINGLY GETTING NOWHERE

It has bothered me that, when I'm on the street, my eyes dart everywhere, and this doesn't seem to have changed at all. Every once in a while I have some sort of realization, and it gets better for a day or two, but it never has lasted. Supposedly, this acting out is covering up some sort of pain. But WHAT PAIN? There is nothing so obvious, this just feels habitual.

TRYING TO LOOK INWARDS INSTEAD OF OUTWARDS

I decided I'm going to try NOT TO LOOK OUTWARDS, and instead, TRY TO LOOK INWARDS. TRY TO FEEL MY PAIN, if there is any.

Then, I realized, the 12 steps are like homeopathic medicine. Instead of covering up the symptoms, we let the real sickness come to the surface so that we can get rid of it.

DC is always talking about becoming more aware of our perceptions and motives. I understood that, a big part of this, is to realize when we're feeling negative emotions—heading down hill on the way to acting out. We need to keep tabs on our feelings, and reach out for help instead of reaching for our drug.

FINDING AN EMOTIONAL CENTER OF BALANCE

But, recently, I realized that being aware of our perceptions and motives, in a deeper sense, is to BE IN TUNE WITH OURSELVES. I feel that my eyes, and my mind, are darting everywhere, looking for something that I'm missing. BUT, I can be STILL, be calm, be at peace with myself. I felt like something inside me came into alignment which has been out of wack all my life. AND THAT WAS THE PAIN!!! Like something turned on that has always been turned off. A sense of inner peace and tranquility. As if I have found, finally, an EMOTIONAL CENTER OF BALANCE. Like my mind has finally tuned into my heart. I can be at rest, my mind can be at rest. It can stop racing. It can just BE. I can just BE. DC has mentioned, "Feeling comfortable in your own skin," and I think I have just finally felt what this means.

And, it feels GOOD. Until now, I thought that the 12-steps just helps keep the RID at bay; so as not to feel stressed out. But, it was just the absence of negative feelings. But, now I see that it's not just pushing away the RID. It's TUNING IN to your heart, and finding peace and tranquility and happiness and contentment there.

I hope I have done some sort of justice to this experience trying to get it across in words.

--Eye.

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count
Posted by Dov - 03 Jun 2011 04:32

Wow. Geshmak. Thanks, Eyeball guy!

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 05 Jun 2011 17:18

I was talking to someone recently, and he asked me if I'd really be so bad off if I wasn't involved with GYE and the 12-steps. It's hard to believe that we'd all end up in the gutters so soon that we need to worry about it.

I thought that if, instead of the gradual improvements I have had in my life over the past 2 years, if I were going in the other direction gradually, here's what my life would look like:

I'd be spending ever so much more time escaping reality. Probably heavily addicted to video p*rn by now (Thank G-d, I never got involved with anything besides photos). We just upgraded to high speed internet when I found GYE, and I think I was within a few short weeks of falling into that trap.

I'd be fighting with my wife at least half the time, as she knocked herself out taking care of the family and the house and I just wasted all my time "working." I'd have no relationship whatsoever with my kids, as I spent all my time so busy "working" that I totally ignored them. This is how my life was going at that point, and it would have only gotten two years worse.

And, of course, I'd feel miserable about myself and about life.

Thanks to GYE and the 12-steps my life, instead, continually gets better. I am more productive, and more easy going at the same time. I grow ever closer to my wife and to my children.

I continually feel better about myself, and about life.

There are setbacks, there are ups and downs, and I make mistakes, but life, overall, keeps getting better.

--Eye.

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count
Posted by ben durdayah - 05 Jun 2011 19:56

Wow!

Thanks for sharing.

I really identify with that last post in particular.

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count
Posted by Yosef Hatzadik - 06 Jun 2011 18:44

Did anyone notice who is at the very top of the Wall of Honor?

You can check it out [here](#).

It is non other than our dear friend **Eye.nonymous!!!!**

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count
Posted by kickinit81 - 06 Jun 2011 20:20

[Yosef Hatzadik wrote on 06 Jun 2011 18:44:](#)

Did anyone notice who is at the very top of the Wall of Honor?

You can check it out [here](#).

It is non other than our dear friend **Eye.nonymous!!!!**

Hey Congrats!!

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 07 Jun 2011 07:29

Thanks everyone for the congrats.

I am actually feeling rather down at the moment.

I know some of the reasons--have gotten even less sleep than usual this week. And, the heat is getting to me--this has been a major trigger my whole life, and I had a serious slip last night.

Also, Mikvah night is coming up. We've had a new trend, that it doesn't usually work out on Mikvah night because it's so late and we're both so tired. Last time it didn't work out for a couple of days afterwards. When it happens I can usually look at the situation and realize it is sensible, and remember that I won't die without s*x. But, the time leading up to it all, I start to get really down.

Besides that, with Shavuos in the middle of this week I'm totally off schedule this week and, though I'm trying to accept this, I think if I'm really honest with myself it's got me feeling anxious about everything.

Also, today is erev Shavuos and all the kids are home and I feel like I'm going to spend all day in a fog just trying to get through it.

I guess these are the most obvious sources of RID in my life at this moment, and I don't feel it's so easy to get past it right now. Some times are easier, and some times are harder. I made about a half-dozen phone calls to people from GYE or the 12-step groups, but no luck this morning, so I'm hoping that posting about all this will help, at least a bit.

I have been listening to the Joe and Charlie AA workshop and they describe how a drunk takes a drink and then he gets a craving and goes way out of control. I have been wondering, "does this really happen to me?" But, I've been feeling really down since yesterday and when I was walking the streets I didn't just look and I didn't just stare, but I really DRUNK IT IN, and this is the first time I've really been aware of this difference. And, after that, I felt myself falling down hill fast. I wasn't too far away from acting out. And, I know if I don't try my best to follow the steps now, I'm sure to act out within the next couple of days, if not some time today. So, I'm trying my best, I think, and please G-d help me.

--Eye.

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