

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 ZemirosShabbos - 06 Jul 2011 16:42

Eye, i feel for you.

sounds really frustrating. i also feel like i drive myself crazy with my mind sometimes.

some wise people here on the forum have suggested that when our minds are going crazy we need to DO something, not try to straighten out the thinking.

wishing you the best

zs

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count

Posted by ur-a-jew - 06 Jul 2011 16:53

Just saw this on Aish.com, thought it may be useful:

Stress is part of everyday life. But when the pressure starts to grind us down and cause health and personal problems it's time to make a change. We all know that stress can bring on heart disease, stomach issues, ulcers, depression, and relationship issues. Just reading that sentence can stress us out!

Sometimes we think about something worrisome and get that sick-to-the-stomach feeling. We

don't think clearly. Stress keeps us up at night.

So what can we do?

Instead of allowing the stress to control us, let's try to take back control and live life better. We can then eliminate unnecessary tensions and deal with those pressures we must face more effectively.

UNPLUG

We are in an endless state of mental congestion. We cannot hear ourselves think. We go to a wedding, graduation, family dinner, or vacation in a beautiful place, but we are only half there. Our minds are somewhere else; longing to check the blackberry or iPhone just one more time. When we are constantly distracted, it becomes impossible to function well. We parent with half an eye, work with half an ear, and live with half a heart. The pressure of being perpetually on call takes its toll and does not allow us space to breath.

In Ethics of the Fathers it is written: "All my days I have found nothing better than silence." Let's begin by finding some moments to regain peace and quiet in our day. Take the plunge and unplug.

RID YOURSELF OF PUTDOWNS

A lot of stress has to do with the way we see ourselves. When we give ourselves negative messages and put ourselves down we lower our sense of self and destroy our own self esteem. We can become our own worst enemy.

"I can't believe I'm such an idiot."

"What was I thinking? I'll never be able to do this!"

“That’s it; I really messed up this time. I’m finished.”

Remove the negative eye – it will only stress you out. Stop demeaning yourself. Replace detrimental self-statements with positive ones. Start believing in yourself.

And if you do happen to make a mistake and fall, pick yourself up and start anew. This is true strength.

STOP PROCRASTINATING

Sometimes we have a problem that feels so overwhelming, we just can’t deal with it. So we push it off. We leave it for tomorrow. And then tomorrow comes but we push it off again. Putting off a problem only causes us to worry more. We toss and turn all night imagining the ‘what ifs’, and everything seems so much more troublesome. The night feels suffocating.

Falling behind can make the situation worse. Most problems are not as awful as you think. And even if you believe the situation is insurmountable, at least you can attempt to take some small steps in the right direction and feel empowered as you try. When you make an effort to confront your fear, you will not feel as overwhelmed. And you may even be surprised to find a solution within reach with those you thought you could not approach.

GUARD YOUR HEALTH

It is a mitzvah in the Torah to watch over and take care of our God–given bodies. Stress depletes us of our energy. We turn to carbs and high fat foods to refuel. (Read standing in front of an open freezer with a pint of Hagen Daaz Caramel Cone Explosion in hand). But the quicker we refill, the quicker we crash. Instead of loading up at night and waking up with extra pounds and regrets, get your body moving. Take the stairs and not the elevator. Go for a walk or a quick jog. Our bodies produce endorphins when we exercise. They are natural mood boosters that can help reduce stress levels. Even dance around the living room. Any little bit of activity can help.

Get your body moving and make time to do something fun. Make time for the activities you enjoy. Do something fun. Listen to music, ride a bike, attend the class you've always wanted to join. Be sure to set aside moments each day for prayer and reflection.

SEE THE GOOD

Come on, it's not all bad all the time. Of course it's easier to see the dark side and fall into despair. But you do have some good going on, you just need to open your eyes and stop complaining.

"My in-laws are coming for the weekend, I can't take it."

"These Sunday carpools with the kids are driving me crazy. I am so stressed out from them."

"My baby was up crying the whole night. I'm ready to explode."

Well, at least you have family to share your life with!

"My boss is nuts! He is a pressure cooker."

Thank God you have a job!

It's all how you see the situation. Will you focus on the good or just always be a complainer?

The more we complain, the more stressed we feel.

Happiness and a 'feel good' mentality is in our hands.

ALLOW PEOPLE IN

It is a mistake to cut yourself off from those who care about you. You may be overwhelmed, even ashamed of your situation, but those who love you want to stand by your side. Don't be an island unto yourself. You will wake up one day and wonder what happened. Where did all the people in my life go and why does my phone never ring? I am not speaking about those thousand friends on facebook. I am talking about that one friend or family member, who would cross oceans for you, who feels your pain as if it's his own, who sheds a tear for your sorrow. You will experience joy again but what a pity to have lost those who love you on the way.

When we focus on our problems 24/7, we allow stress to control our lives. No one is perfect and none of us will have perfect lives. Set reasonable expectations and know that this is all part of living. Take charge of those challenges that you can control. Let go of that which is beyond you.

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count

Posted by ben durdayah - 06 Jul 2011 17:17

I don't know what I can add to those wonderful thoughts eye, but I feel for you and pray that you be able to see the chesed Hashem **eye to eye** bekarov mammesh.

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count

Posted by Eye.nonymous - 07 Jul 2011 05:10

Thanks for your responses and chizzuk.

After I wrote that post, I went to daven mincha. It had really helped to write out what I was feeling, it made it easier to move on. As I was waiting for a minyan to start, I was feeling really bad because I had been on an emotional rampage. I thought, "Am I ALWAYS going to keep doing this? Will I ever be able to stop?" Then, I thought--we'll it's sort of like a fall. And, there are tools I can use to pick myself up again, and hopefully not fall in the future.

Then, I realized, IT IS EXACTLY THE SAME THING! The same addictive process which starts by looking at something I shouldn't be looking at, and then eventually takes over my life and eventually compels me to act out, was happening here. Something had ticked me off sometime, I think about a week ago, and has been growing and festering, taking over everything and spilling over into everything I do.

It's not just my lust I need to surrender to Hashem. It's also my entire way of thinking, and also my emotions--they way I react to life. And it all sort of goes together.

This really should be no chiddush because I think it's clearly spelled out in the 12-steps, but it suddenly hit me a whole new way. We go through the EXACT SAME addictive and self-destructive process with our emotions and thoughts as we do with our lust.

I think I'm doing better today.

--Eye.

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count
Posted by ben durdayah - 07 Jul 2011 08:19

B"H

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count

Posted by pinokio - 07 Jul 2011 13:54

well said, buffalo bill

see white book, "the spiritual basis of addiction"

we are really addicted to self will, resentment, anger, blame...

step one is about lust or methodane, whatever you like. but the rest is like what you said- to change the whole way i lived my life till now.

here's a nice personal example: in regards to the inyunim of the married guys forum, i used to blame my wife and be all despondent, broken, crushed that she wasnt interested, she wasnt the way i wanted her to look, she wasnt awake enough, she didnt x10,000 different things. why cant she be like....and dress like all the....and act like....and do

now, i say to myself, calmly (a chiddush)-"avi-you are scum of the earth. no one owes you anything, not god, not your wife. And here's a real doosy, put a belt on or it'll knock your pants right out the door-you really want to know why my wife did any undesirable things to me, if she really ever did (and not just in my imagination)? its because...psssst, here's the secret-I RUINED HER LIFE, I DESTROYED EVERY HAPPY OUNCE AND VESTIGE OF KDUSHA AND HOPE INSIDE THIS PERSON TO THE POINT WHERE NOW SHE TOO NEEDS A RECOVERY i am a murderer, and i must bare my guilt and fix myself, and then be a healthy husband to fix her by just being nice to her and simple torah stuff like that.

so the next time i want to blame her, its a different story. kinda like the story of the hitchhikers guide to the galaxy. ie. ridiculous.

good to see you fellows, thanks for hosting me on the thread, got to go

-sweetsieepoo annie

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count
Posted by ulay-yachus - 07 Jul 2011 21:47

Eye,

I feel very the same about the surrender idea that you wrote about. The more we know that we are not in charge here, [although we make the maximum we can - but we can't promise what is going to happen] the more relaxe we will be. I red something like that in a special book' which says, that we need to be like a horse, that the result doesn't bother him, just the effort he makes. We can do the effort, and that's all....

BTW I talked to my wife and got her to know this website, and she was glad and proud for me. Although she knows that I have that addiction, she doesn't relaize that it has connection to watching porn, so that is not telling her all the truth....but it's a begging.

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 10 Jul 2011 12:35

[ulay-yachus wrote on 07 Jul 2011 21:47:](#)

BTW I talked to my wife and got her to know this website, and she was glad and proud for me. Although she knows that I have that addiction, she doesn't relaize that it has connection to watching porn, so that is not telling her all the truth....but it's a begging.

That's really smart not to disclose too much at once. It's not really being dishonest; it's being safe.

--Eye.

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 18 Jul 2011 05:13

135 days.

I'm feeling kinda' weak lately.

Please G-d help me stay clean today.

--Eye.

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count
Posted by yehoshua - 18 Jul 2011 07:04

I read that a dry drunk gets better quicker, than a wet drunk!!!

What does that mean? I guess even yehoshua is moving along, becoming more like you, getting there to become a dry drunk. YEAH, YUHU, YUPI ;D

What can I dry drunk do? He has the same problems as before, but now a different exit. Did Hashem give you arms and face, speech and hearing and blood and soul? He did, than You can breathe, just breathe man.

THE MORE YOU GIVE, THE MORE YOU GET.

You give so much Eye, don't forget that.

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count

Posted by TheJester - 18 Jul 2011 10:25

[Eye.nonymous wrote on 18 Jul 2011 05:13:](#)

135 days.

I'm feeling kinda' weak lately.

Please G-d help me stay clean today.

--Eye.

Day 135 is *Gematria* ????. Also ????.

BUT... Stay strong today, and you will be assured of:

???? ??????

Yay!

Edit

And tomorrow, you get:

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count

Posted by Eye.nonymous - 19 Jul 2011 13:22

Feeling better today.

Actually had to face an evil beurocratic office today, and it was a very difficult situation, and on top of that it' a ta'anis.

In the past (I love these before-after stories) I would have really been scared and nervous and I would have pushed the whole thing onto my wife, and she would have done it without me or with me tagging along as an accessory. But now, I was able to put my fears aside, be responsible, and even go and face this evil office while my wife remained at home with the kids (I actually volunteered--we were given short notice and the energy we would have spent trying to arrange babysitting for the kids would have drained us well before our appointment, and we really needed to be in top shape for it).

I faced the evil and feel pretty good about it, and I feel I did as well as probably anyone could have done.

I mentioned to my wife afterwards, "I couldn't have done this if not for recovery."

--Eye.

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count

Posted by Eye.nonymous - 19 Jul 2011 13:35

I have been slipping lately, and trying to figure out why. Thinking more and more about how much I'm slipping and how awful it is and how I'm an addict and I'll never be able to beat this. And, am I ever going to find life pleasurable enough that I won't feel like acting out?

Then, I remembered that when I was a teenager I used to keep a journal. I used to analyze myself and try to understand other people, too. Every once in a while I hit on something that seemed to be useful. Once in a while I even discovered something that I could use to help other people.

That was a really good feeling.

Now I see, through the forum--slow-motion communication, because you can read and re-read someone's thoughts, I sometimes seem to notice something standing out--a hint, or a hint of a hint. I find that I have learned some useful tools through recovery, and perhaps this person could benefit from it. So, I write a reply, hoping I am able to be helpful.

Part of the addiction is, we have learned "Don't talk, don't trust, don't feel." So, the forum still doesn't seem quite real. There are no faces, no voices, and we are all still hiding behind cute anonymous usernames.

But, this ability is spilling over. I joined a live SA group, and it is a pleasure to see that I am able to share--in person!

More than this, I have been trying to improve my connection with certain relatives. I started calling weekly, just to say hello. The conversations were very superficial at first. But now, I see the same abilities at work--picking up on a little nuance, seeing where a principle I have learned might be of use to another person. I don't preach about the 12-steps, but I can offer a little comment or ask a friendly question which opens up a whole new perspective to this person.

So, instead of focusing on whether or not I am acting out, I am trying to focus on what I can contribute to other people's lives. And, I realize that I've really got something valuable to contribute, if only I keep my eyes open for opportunities.

And that feels really good.

--Eye.

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count
Posted by the.guard - 19 Jul 2011 13:52

Beautiful!

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