

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 (Elyah) official count
Posted by 1daat - 25 Sep 2012 06:38

Elya, thank you for a good cry. Soooo real. Yeah, old age doesn't fix a thing. sure isn't how I had it pictured. Where's my hammok??? Thanks for keeping it real. I continue to daven for you, personally, daily. Couldn't hoyt.

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 29 Sep 2012 20:06

I've only got a second to write, but I want to update my thread.

I'm feeling a lot of lust lately. I've got to make sure not to slip into any old behaviors. Thoughts are especially challenging now--my sick mind can justify, "well, I'm not actually doing anything." However, the thoughts are more powerful, I think, than other forms of acting out.

Also, on the weaker moments, I get this though, "well I'm not going to m*sturbate or look at p*rn, so I might as well just drift off into fantasy land in my mind."

So, I've got to watch out for that.

On a positive note, I was really dreading the holidays and not being ready in time. Thank G-d, I made it through slichos and Yom Kippur without passing out. False Evidence Appears Real. I've got to remember that. The rest of the holidays shouldn't be as hard as that.

Also, managed to get the succah pretty much all up and even decorated in good time. And also managed to get the major ingredients for the arba minim (and get them checked by a rav) within one afternoon--a process that usually takes a couple of day.

Lately, my motto has been GOOD ENOUGH. I even just re-painted an exterior wall which we use as part of our succah because it was looking gross. I don't think I used the right paint, and I didn't do the whole area (just touched up some of the worst spots), and I didn't scrape off the old paint first. I wasn't going for perfect or even great--just wanted to do a GOOD ENOUGH job so the succah will look better for the holiday. I think I spent only 20 or 30 minutes at it.

So, have a good succos,

Elyah

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count
Posted by nederman - 30 Sep 2012 01:48

It's a great philosophy.

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Worse_is_better

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count
Posted by think good - 30 Sep 2012 07:46

Also, on the weaker moments, I get this though, "well I'm not going to m*sturbate or look at p*rn, so I might as well just drift off into fantasy land in my mind."

So, I've got to watch out for that.

Very much my problem too. Most of my falls start with fantasy thoughts.

I also have to watch out for that especially during these special days.

Good Yom Tov

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count

Posted by Dov - 30 Sep 2012 10:32

So geshmak, so true, Eyeball man. Painting the wall, dealing with your child's problem in school...real life is where it's at.

Contrary to what so many here seem to be saying, sobriety and recovery are *not* really about controlling our penises or our porn. They are about **engaging and staying in our real life** - the real life that Hashem is handing to us daily. In other words, G-d's Will for us. We all pretend that keeping Hashem's Will is about keeping His mitzvos or keeping sober, or whatever...but that's only a small part of the real picture. His Will is *really* mainly and **mostly** expressed in the life He is actually giving us - what *happens* to us daily, *where* we really are, *who* we are with, and *what* happens to us. His hashgochah is the main way His Will interfaces with us. The tzaddikim refer to that when they say everything that happens and ever will happen is merumaz in the Torah. That means there are more things in the Torah about daily history and hashgocha protis than about issur v'heter!

But as simple and obvious as it may sound, this is so hard for frum addicts to accept. For instead, we can get distracted by fantasy, resentment, perfectionism..."anything, anything rather than 'just' accepting and living in the apparently imperfect life that You are giving me, Hashem!" We get distracted by issur v'heter - and miss the *main* deal!

An AA once told me an amazing, simple thing. We discover that our problem is not drinking. And it never was. Our problem is sobriety.

We can't stand it, so we resume drinking.

It's not about controlling ourselves, learning how to control ourselves, or whatever. It's about having the serenity, hachno'oh, and honesty to accept the things we cannot change, the courage to accept - and then work to change - the things we *can* change, and the wisdom to know the difference between them. In other words, **live real life**. Our fantasies will always be waiting at the door to whisk us away from the latest discomfort with real life! That's the nature of the beast, it seems. As He told Kayin: *Lapesach chatas roveitz* (and "chatas" means missing the target, going astray from reality - not just "*sin*", of course, cuz all that was going on there was Kayin feeling discouraged about his korban).

But you are not fooled, it seems. You are in this game for keeps today. That's tremendous and I hope you see that!!

Continued hatzlocha!

- Dov

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 02 Oct 2012 09:50

Elyah here, sexaholic, just checking in.

Right now I am feeling that I don't like the holidays very much--especially Succos. I have this feeling of being trapped without any privacy and without any schedule or structure, squished together with my wife and kids. All my wife keeps asking is, "What do you want to do?" and there really is nothing to do and I wish she'd express some preference.

All we do is sit around eating, either inviting other people to our Succah, or going to visit other people's succah. Long, drawn out meals that I really can't stand.

But, when we're not eating, we're just sort of sitting around waiting until the next time we eat.

I just want to run away! I hate this feeling of just waiting to eat, and then being all uncomfortable while eating, and then being done eating just sort of waiting to do it all over again.

Besides that, I'm feeling extremely exhausted--all I want to do is take a big long nap, and maybe I'd feel better after that. But when I wake up even after a good night's sleep I still feel exhausted. And I'm also achey all over--I've got these excruciating back pains and I don't know why.

So, I don't really want to move or even be awake, and here I am sort of trapped into squishy social settings.

I got home this morning and I think my wife was on the phone with her sponsor. Apparantly she had a difficult morning already with the kids. She locked herself in the kitchen--so I couldn't get anything to eat although it was already getting late and I was getting hungry (along with all the other discomforts mentioned above).

I didn't yell. I thought I could just wait, and I'm sure I'll have something to eat in a little while. My son came up with some sandwiches for me soon after.

A couple of days ago I came home in the morning after davening and found that my oldest son locked himself in my room. I got very frustrated (one thing that really gets me angry is this

feeling of being trapped even in my own house). Thank G-d, I didn't say anything. I went out to the marpeset, took a few deep breaths, and ignored this. I did ask him, "how are you doing?"

My wife was having a difficult time with him and told him to go to our room to calm down. He hadn't gotten dressed yet and hadn't eaten breakfast yet. I told him calmly, "time to get dressed," and asked him what he would like to have for breakfast. I think the rest of the day went pretty well with him. If I had blown up at him, I think the whole rest of the day would have been a huge struggle.

I sat down just now to write about my frustrations. I see that, after some of the negative things came loose, there were a few positive things to share, too. It's too easy to focus on the negative.

So, I might not be feeling great today, but I can try to make the most of it.

--Elyah

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 02 Oct 2012 14:19

Just made it through an afternoon with some friends over. I wasn't feeling up for it, but wasn't too bad. I even pulled out my saxophone and played a little bit. I think the afternoon was especially good for the kids as they had some new friends over.

But, when it came time to leave, our wives got talking about something, and talking, and talking, and talking. I got really frustrated, and felt especially trapped--in my own house.

After they left I called some SA buddies, which was helpful. I was encouraged to attend a meeting tonight--I wasn't really feeling like going and wasn't sure if the meeting was on. Also, I got some encouragement to go to a major SA get-together later this week.

Part of the problem of feeling so down is FEELING BAD ABOUT FEELING DOWN. If I just accept that I am human and it's okay to feel down sometimes, I think that's a lot healthier and I think that helps the feeling pass more quickly, too. It's not necessarily going to vanish in an instant, but already it does feel like that DOWN feeling has less of a hold on me--even though I don't feel so particularly lively and cheerful.

Acceptance--of the good and of the bad--is healthy, I think.

--Elyah

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count
Posted by Dov - 03 Oct 2012 03:56

That was great to read, those two posts above, thanks Elyah. As far as the awkward boringness of succos and free time with everybody there....you are so normal in that. It would be nice to be able to throw at you something really frum sounding like, "just open up a mishnayos with your children or read them midrash stories! You'll have a great time and it's great chinuch, too!" - but I can't do that. It's too nauseating.

So I just played six games of Gin with my 11yo son (after I tired to explain to him why the schach has to be made of something that is not mekabel tum'ah - that didn't work too well)....we had a great time.

Teishvu k'ein taduru can be a humbling thing, sometimes...but nice.

PS. I won every single game. I'm terrible.

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 03 Oct 2012 11:23

I realize part of the reason I'm feeling so horrible about the holidays is that I was thinking, "Well, after everything's ready and the holiday actually starts--it'll be a cinch!"

But, that's not so. Once the holiday starts, it's still difficult--though in a different way than the preparations. I had unrealistic expectations.

After being fed up with all these discussions to, "plan what to do," with my wife, last night she suggested we just play a game together--two rounds of Rummikub (we each won one).

My wife was supposed to go to a doctor's appointment today and I had agreed to take the kids to the park while she did that. In the end, her appointment was cancelled. I still agreed to take the kids to the park. In the past I had been not so happy about leaving the succah, but this year I questioned this and even asked my Rav. Basically, it is within the bounds of normalcy to take the kids to a local park for a couple of hours. I pointed out, "Teishvu k'ein taduru"--if on any other occasion we all had a week off together, we'd also have to leave the house and take the kids somewhere so we won't all go crazy. My Rav agreed, he is very reasonable.

So, this morning I walked with my kids to the park, helped them climb in some trees, pushed them on some swings, and then walked home together. It was a good morning for this functioning father--thanks to recovery. [Beforehand, as soon as the doctor cancelled, I also would have cancelled].

--Elyah

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 04 Oct 2012 09:21

Yet another day of succos has gone by. Last night I took my older kids to a party hosted by a Rav of mine from when I was in Yeshiva.

I was lusting like crazy all the while on the bus ride there and back.

I realize that I've got a lot of suppressed negative feelings fueling this lust. I'm really angry at my wife because she has never accompanied me (except maybe once, and even then it was just begrudgingly). This Rav was a huge influence in my life and I think it's important to keep up some sort of connection with him, and I'm really angry that my wife is so negative about it.

Then, on the other hand, although this Rav has been a major influence in my life, I don't really have much of a relationship with him and I actually feel intimidated by him.

I'm sure there are other factors contributing to my restlessness, irritability, and discontent, but those are the two that stood out the most.

I was staring at every female along the way, and I couldn't stop. All sorts of thoughts and ideas were entering my head and as fast as I would try to get rid of them, they would come back--and even stronger.

Thank God, I managed not to do anything major that I would regret. But, I felt like I would lose my sobriety if I just went to bed. Although it was late and it is usually wise to get to bed earlier rather than later, I felt that would be unwise.

I pulled out the SA Buddy list and called a whole bunch of people (and managed to reach some of them). After each conversation I felt like the lust had weakened, but I still didn't feel I was in a safe place. I kept on calling and calling--I was on the phone with different guys from the program for over an hour. It was helpful getting different kind of responses--one guy is newer in the program and just listened. Another fellow was a veteran with decades of sobriety and offered a lot of practical program advice. Another fellow was similar to myself, and we just had a mutual share.

After a bunch of calls I felt, "I can go to bed and stay sober." Not only that, I felt positive, and relieved. So I went to bed and today I am still sober. Thank God.

--Elyah

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count
Posted by mifatfait - 04 Oct 2012 10:22

Your awesome. One of the best examples around here.

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count
Posted by Blind Beggar - 04 Oct 2012 11:02

Great stuff, Elyah. You really are awesome and it's not just me saying this: Hashem told me he thinks you are awesome too.

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count
Posted by nederman - 04 Oct 2012 11:08

Why do you think your wife doesn't go?

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Re: Eye.nonymous (Elyah) official count
Posted by mifatfait - 04 Oct 2012 20:06

She probably doesn't want to go cause she's not interested and would rather yap on the phone with some friends or hang out in the park. The reason for that is cause she's a woman. Women are awesome, that's why I lust for them so much.

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