

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.

=====

Re: Eye.nonymous official count

Posted by Eye.nonymous - 06 May 2010 11:14

Forum looks a little weird right now. Hope this is working...

188.

I've gone through some more tough times recently. Actually, I'm beginning to think that's the norm.

I really blew up a couple of days ago. I told my wife, "I think I know why..."

She said, "I KNOW... because we had plans for some intimacy and it has been postponed..."

I said, "IS THAT WHAT YOU THINK OF ME!!!" (A few months ago I would have probably had some huge "realization" like this).

Then I said, "No. DC always talks about checking our perceptions and motives. I went through some very stressful or uncomfortable experiences throughout the past few days. I never stopped anywhere to check out what was going on in my head. I really should have stopped to rest, to calm down, and to regain my focus. But I didn't."

That was my realization now.

Besides that, I've had this guilty feeling. Here and there I come up with these great realizations, and they really make a difference. A few days later, they're gone. Maybe a pale shadow of them remains. And sometimes I'm writing these great realizations a day or two after I realized them, and they're already faded. On one hand, I feel that it's useful to share them. On the other hand, I feel hyppocritical because I'm not exactly living with them 100% (or 2%) anymore. It's a weird feeling and I don't know what to do about it.

--Eye.

=====

Re: Eye.nonymous official count
Posted by briut - 06 May 2010 11:39

Hi, Eye.

It's nice to hear your virtual 'voice' again.

I'm not going to jump in here, because it sounds like you're already well on your way to some insights into this. Insights that will stick with you and 'not fade away.' So, it's nice that you'd pose the question but I think the one with the answers is facing you in the mirror.

Anyone who reads your stuff knows you're very smart, insightful, powerful, etc. What better advice could you get?

B'kavod u'b'ahava. - Briut

=====

Re: Eye.nonymous official count
Posted by Steve - 06 May 2010 14:15

Hi Eye Guy,

We all have these GREAT MOMENTS OF CLARITY that fade away as soon as new troubles come up. That's something Chazal knew all too well about - it's part of the human condition. Remember a persons basic character is molded in early childhood, his perception of life, himself and his personality are formed by the time he's 5 or 6, so an adult moment of hisorrirus, a small new handbag, can get swallowed back up by the big heavy old suitcases, the baggage we carry since we were kids.

My Rosh Yeshiva said that to avoid losing hisorrirus, make it CONCRETE right away after you have it, by doing an ACTION that brings it into your life, and focus on planning to repeat that action at scheduled intervals. Also, write it down ASAP so you don't forget it, and REVIEW those words again and again over the next few days to internalize it more. (Same advice goes for a novel Torah thoought you have) Otherwise, it'll go the same way as a person's name that you meet at a party, and when you see them next, it wont be recalled.

Beracha V'Hatzlacha - see you on the call.

=====
=====

Re: Eye.nonymous official count
Posted by Dov - 06 May 2010 23:29

Reb Eye,

We all have good times, big times, katnus times and confused times; we all have moods. Nu. The burden of having to figure these all out and control them to keep things (and myself) going the way I'd like them to go is just too much to bear.

Take it easy. You will probably feel different about things tomorrow. Have a talk with your sponsor or a program buddy. Go through the motions of the rest of the day and admit you are

still doing so nicely even though there is regression in some ways.

If things stay this way for a while, you will have to face it in order not to act out. For me, that's the only sensible motivation to do anything sometimes. Nu. Not so bad. If it cannot be addressed with the steps, nor with a good talk with a friend, wife, or program buddy, then it's probably too big for you anyway. And that's Lo alecha hamlocho ligmor-time, for me.

We really love the Eyeball guy. Thanks for sharing yourself. And your wife is a lucky lady - not perfectly lucky, but still *very* lucky.

=====

Re: Eye.nonymous official count
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 08 May 2010 19:41

On Friday morning I was feeling terribly close to acting out.

I blew up about something in the afternoon, a couple of hours before Shabbos.

(I even slipped, I sent that "hi, how are you" E-mail to a "ghost from the past," an idea I've been wrestling with for quite a while.)

Something had been bothering me, but I wasn't sure what it was.

My wife said, "Maybe you should try calling one of the guys from DC's group?"

I reached DovInIsrael. He was very helpful.

I complained, "I don't feel like I've changed yet."

He said, "You haven't--you don't really change until step 5." (We'll be starting step 5 soon with DC, BE"H).

I discussed a lot of my recent problems with him, and he pointed out a common thread.

More importantly, I do think my wife have pretty good communication. BUT, I feel like we're always bogged down trying to figure out solutions to our problems.

DovInIsrael made an important distinction--between sharing your feelings, and between talking about problems.

AND, he emphasized the importance of looking at the positive side of things.

During the next conversation with my wife, I tried to gently steer the conversation in this direction. It was great! I usually feel--okay, now we're discussing our problems and it's going to end when we get this feeling of being hopelessly overwhelmed. STUCK. This time I felt--the goal is to GET OUT OF THIS!!! We're not going to feel closer by talking about PROBLEMS and endless but hopeless solutions, but we can get closer by talking about our FEELINGS about our problems.

And, try to look for the positive side, and appreciate it.

And try not to dwell on things that are beyond our control.

Also, I mentioned my E-mail slip to DII. I've noticed that, while it was helpful to confess my addiction in general to my wife, it hasn't always seemed like the best course of action to confess every individual slip or fall. I almost confessed this E-mail slip to my wife, but I thought I'd better ask DII first.

I asked if I should tell my wife. He said, "What, just because you acted out?!" Even if I drew the same conclusion on my own, I would have felt like I was wrongly hiding something from my wife. I would have continued carrying around some guilt. Having an objective person's support, I felt like I can just forget about it and move on. ALSO, I'm not hiding it--I DID confess it to someone. Which, I think, serves the same cleansing purpose.

Shavuah Tov,

--Eye.

=====
=====

Re: Eye.nonymous official count

Posted by the.guard - 08 May 2010 21:34

(I even slipped, I sent that "hi, how are you" E-mail to a "ghost from the past," an idea I've been wrestling with for quite a while.)

Anyway, congrats on the admission and on MOVING PAST IT :D

=====
=====

Re: Eye.nonymous official count

Posted by Sturggle - 08 May 2010 23:19

Hey Eye.

Shavua tov.

Sounds like you're working it out.

I don't think any of this is ever supposed to get easy,
seems like you found a good way to deal, reaching out to someone.

Always rooting for you,
always here for you,

Sturggle

=====
=====

Re: Eye.nonymous official count
Posted by sci1977 - 09 May 2010 19:01

Keep on trucking my friend! One day at time.

=====
=====

Re: Eye.nonymous official count
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 13 May 2010 12:30

I did the 5th step call with DC yesterday.

Step 4 was to make a fearless moral inventory of our resentments, fears, and misconduct.

Step 5 is to share this inventory on a 3-way call (yourself, your sponsor, and Hashem).

I expected the call would be some sort of psychoanalysis session.

It was far from it. Simple, but not easy. I gained a whole new perspective on life. As long as I keep the right set of glasses on, the RID will be non-existent.

It was very inspirational. But, I was afraid this was just another intellectual exercise. Just like all the self-help books and mussar sefarim I have read in the past. Nice ideas, but nothing really changes.

Right after the call, my wife asked me to help put one of the children to bed. I literally felt like I was wearing some sort of safety suit. Like some sort of padding was between myself and frustration.

Later on, I got a call from my mother. A difficult topic came up, which in the past has often gone sour. This time, I felt entirely different. I put on a new set of glasses. A whole bunch of new options, different options, BETTER options, opened up before me that I had never seen before! The conversation ended up very positive.

Later on, my baby was crying and my wife was out. I went to rock his crib. Suddenly, one of my fears (on the fear worksheet) popped up. I thought THERE'S NO NEED FOR THIS! I can live life one moment at a time, without the resentments from the past, and without the fears of the future. I felt an amazing sense of serenity.

NOW, another one of my fears is that, in person, I'm not very comfortable talking to people. I felt another change from these calls. My first reaction was TO CALL UP some real people, other fellows from DC's group, and share my experience with them. Instead of crawling over to the solitude of the computer screen. DC suggested I post my recent experience on the forum. I thought, "Oh, yeah, I almost forgot."

--Eye.

=====
=====

Re: Eye.nonymous official count
Posted by Sturggle - 13 May 2010 18:30

well, thanks for sharing!

and you seem pretty chill in person...

=====

Re: Eye.nonymous official count
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 14 May 2010 08:54

[sturggle wrote on 13 May 2010 18:30:](#)

well, thanks for sharing!

and you seem pretty chill in person...

Thanks.

=====

Re: Eye.nonymous official count
Posted by the.guard - 15 May 2010 18:26

ACE laasos laHashem

=====

=====

Re: Eye.nonymous official count

Posted by Eye.nonymous - 16 May 2010 11:32

198. Just checking in.

--Eye.

=====

=====

Re: Eye.nonymous official count

Posted by Eye.nonymous - 19 May 2010 21:05

201.

A comment about DC's phone group. I asked, "If what you're saying is true, all we have to do is change our perspective and then all our problems in life will just vanish!" He said, "Yes, it really is that simple."

(I'll add: First you have to get to, and through, step 5.)

For me, there are about six different things to keep in mind for a different perspective. At first I was running through the whole list whenever I felt something was wrong. I got burned out from it, and I had a very frustrating experience. So I stopped. Then, the next day, I thought "Well, why don't I just try to keep one of them in mind. Each week I'll pick a different one, and eventually I'll get the hang of all six." This worked very well.

Over Shavuos, I really felt a huge change.

Before Yom Tov, I had more patience for my kids. I was fixing a broken zipper on my daughter's yom tov dress instead of barking at her that I don't have time.

My 5 year old was crying. I said "Why are you crying?" Then, "I'm going to give you a BIG hug!" Afterwards I said, "If you're Imma loves you, do you need to cry?" No. "If your Tahte loves you do you need to cry?" No. "If Hashem loves you do you need to cry?" No. He left all happy. My wife later asked me, "What did you say to him?" (she didn't hear our conversation). I said, "Tell Imma." He told her. Her response was, "ZEH LO NORMALI!" I asked if she meant that in a good way or in a bad way. She said, "In a good way."

Now, I don't usually talk like that to my kids. It was totally inspired from what I've learned with DC.

After davening lay'l yom tov, I came home. Instead of being impatient thinking, "WE NEED TO EAT QUICK AND I NEED TO GO OUT AND LEARN!" I was patient with whatever happened.

After dinner I went to learn with my oldest son for a little while (he's 9), then I walked him back home. I did the learn all night thing. And when I came home I didn't feel, "HERE I AM--QUICK I NEED TO EAT AND GET TO SLEEP. HURRY UP!" I was patient instead.

We make kiddush, I took a nap, we had lunch, and then I took the kids out while my wife napped. I took them to the park. In the past I've always been self-conscious. A bench sitter. "What will people think of me!" Today, IT WAS GONE! I was part of the action with my kids. I helped them all climbing up poles and balancing on balance beams. I played frisbee with them. I did schtick with the baby! And some other little kids even joined in the action. There were some other fathers there, either sitting on the bench watching their kids, or sitting on a bench ignoring their kids and reading a sefer. Instead of thinking "OH MY, WHAT DO THEY THINK OF ME!" I thought, "IT'S TOO BAD, THEY DON'T KNOW WHAT THEIR MISSING. I really viewed them as nebuchs. Why should I want to be like them?"

Instead of coming home all frustrated from nagging and whining in the park, we all had a great time! It was rejuvenating!

The fun doesn't stop there.

After yom tov, my wife announced that she felt sick. Instead of getting all angry I thought, "I guess I've got to go into double-parent mode; I've done this before." I stayed calm and cheerful.

I washed the post yom tov dishes. Instead of thinking, "what a great husband I am, I washed the dishes!" I had a much more humble thought, "This is the least I can do for my wife, especially considering all she's done to prepare for yom tov, to make yom tov, and to take care of the kids all the while."

She asked for some water and something to eat. If I would have fulfilled her request, it would have been great. But instead, I was able to think, "what would she REALLY like." I brought her also some herbal tea to drink. Then I thought, "This isn't anything to feel great about--she'd do no less for me!" She was very appreciative.

It's this helpful and humble feeling which is great. I feel FULFILLED after I help out, thinking that it's the least I can do. In the past, even if I would have been helpful, I would have felt, "I just did way more than usual--I deserve some recognition!" And, that recognition doesn't necessarily come. And then, RID would come instead.

=====
=====