

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 Eye.nonymous - 20 May 2010 11:31

...I'll add another point about Shavuos.

I did the stay up all night and learning thing. AND, I didn't have this guilty feeling like, "hey, this is some sort of pay-off for all the times I've stayed up too late with the computer." It was just guilt-free all night learning.

Which felt great.

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count

Posted by Eye.nonymous - 24 May 2010 11:39

206. (I think).

Yesterday I really blew up about something.

Sometimes the success is that, at least, our hindsight has gotten better.

After the dust settled, I started to do some post-mortum analysis.

THEN, I realized--this is still selfishness! The focus is still ME ME ME!

Though, in the past, I thought this sort of thinking was actually positive.

I realized tomorrow is another day. Another try. A chance to do better.

Progress, not perfection.

--Eye.

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count
Posted by briut - 24 May 2010 13:00

I find your process, your insights, and your dedication to the work -- very helpful to my own work and very inspirational in general. Thanks for continuing to share.

Perhaps someday soon, I'll have time to sit and explain exactly where your inspiration hits me, but right now I'd rather sign off and put this latest insight to work. Thanks.

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 24 May 2010 19:36

[Briut wrote on 24 May 2010 13:00:](#)

I find your process, your insights, and your dedication to the work -- very helpful to my own work and very inspirational in general. Thanks for continuing to share.

Thanks Briut.

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 28 May 2010 06:50

I don't write here as frequently anymore, but I've always got a finger on my pulse to see if I've got anything to write about.

We have started the 9th step calls with DC.

Regarding DC's group:

Until now I felt pretty on top of things—Even before I started DC's group I felt I had some awareness of my perceptions and motives, and I realized the REAL issue is not the action out, but the underlying ill feelings. (Much to Dov's credit).

But now we started the 9th step calls, making amends. I looked at all the people I might call, and didn't think there were really any candidates.

What if I've already tried to make amends in the past?

What if the person seems incapable of having a better relationship?

What if I really don't have anything to do with the person I had resentments towards anymore, and things probably won't change. And not because of ill feelings, but because of our different lifestyles, and because we have thousands of miles between us now.

I called up Steve, one of the veterans from DC's group.

Another thing that helped was that I did the 9th step with my wife. It was tricky because we always share the latest insights we've gotten for dealing with life. So, I've been telling her a lot about this program and she's even trying to implement the bits I tell her. So I told her my dilemma. "We're supposed to make amends, and this is how we're supposed to do it... And, by the way, it feels really weird because I'm supposed to do this with you, too, but you know what I'm doing! I told her the 9th step "script" and she said that she'll answer after she thinks about it for a while.

After my talk with Steve, and after my talk with my wife, I reached this conclusion:

It seems that the purpose of the 9th step call is much more than just apologizing. Rather, it's our time to finally face all our fears and resentments. To stop running and hiding from them. One of 3 things can happen.

1. The other person will say they have no idea what we're talking about. We'll finally see that our fears were only an illusion.
2. The other person will tell us how they expect us to make amends. We'll have a chance to repair broken relationships. Instead of being a source of resentment, it can now be a source of satisfaction.
3. The other person will be unforgiving, and we'll face the worst consequences of our actions. **AND WE'LL FINALLY GET IT OVER WITH!** We won't have to live with the fear anymore.

Whatever happens, we're just getting over with it, and moving on. We're free.

AND, in the past, I always expected that once I made amends, the other person would also change. If nothing changed, I assumed "I have to do something ELSE, something MORE."

NOW, I can say, "This is the tried and proven 9th step "script." If this doesn't work, nothing will. I'm giving it a last try. AND THEN I'M OVER WITH THIS! If there's nothing to be salvaged here, I can just throw this garbage out of my head. I don't need to strain my brain anymore over this.

"Closure," as my wife put it. And this is something I've never done before.

Now, with this understanding, I am looking forward to making these calls.

AND, I see that the 9th step, although the main focus is about making amends, it also seems like it could be a useful approach for forging NEW relationships.

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count

Posted by Eye.nonymous - 28 May 2010 06:54

209 or 210 or something.

I had another insight, regarding life's ups and downs. I guess I had this feeling like everything is a constant, and my emotions are on this rollercoaster. Up, down, and sometimes even keel.

BUT, EVERYTHING has its ups and downs. Each aspect of life has its own cycle. For example, sometimes my relationship with my wife is heavy and serious. Sometimes it may

seem just parve. And sometimes we have these moments that seem really great and positive.

The main point is not to get depressed if things don't seem all great and wonderful every moment. Not every moment is going to feel great and wonderful in an obvious way.

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 28 May 2010 06:56

One other thought, from DC's group:

I was getting this feeling that the 12-step program is just going to rid us of our frustration. Which, at first it feels great to overcome something that used to really anger me. BUT, besides this, where is all the positive joy supposed to flow in from?

DC said (to grossly paraphrase and summarize), it's the feeling you get from knowing you're doing the right thing. No counterfeit joy compares to this!

...I've got to work on it.

--Eye.

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 29 May 2010 20:04

211

I've had some major slips lately.

The marital intimacy department has been filled with disappointment. My wife and I are getting along otherwise, but, for example, we're planning an evening and then one of the kids wakes up with a fever, nearly vomiting, and crying for a couple of hours.

One night I was just feeling really sick.

Etc. Etc.

I'm getting depressed about it.

I had a major slip this morning. I managed to carry on with life, get out to shacharis.

I wanted to just quit this whole thing. Forget GYE. Forget DC's group. Just forget about it. Go back to my, as DC calls it, "Drug of choice." Numb the pain.

I debated this issue in my head (that's what I did during shacharis). In the end I realized that, despite the sexual frustrations I'm feeling, I'm still much better off to stick with this program. These problems will pass, eventually.

I'm only on my first time through this 12-step program. It's making a difference, and sometimes I notice a really big difference. But, I'm new at it really. It will take time to get used to it. It takes practice.

At shalosh-seudos my 7-year old daughter was bouncing a soccer ball when I was trying to sing the traditional shalosh-seudos songs. My first thought was to tell her to stop (she's ruining the atmosphere!). Instead, I realized I could just accept it. THEN, I realized I could REACH OUT to her! It was one of the bum-bum-bum moments in the singing. I said, "Hey, you're doing bum-bum-bum with the ball?" We had a little giggle about it together, and it felt good.

The change in attitude, and the change in approach, is only thanks to GYE and DC. If I'd give up, I'd just bark at my daughter. It wouldn't feel good. I'd just hate myself for it.

So, it's worth hanging in there.

Though I am still feeling depressed.

--Eye.

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count
Posted by Eye.nonymous - 29 May 2010 20:42

Sorry to announce, I just fell.

Day 1 again.

-Eye.

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count
Posted by Dov - 30 May 2010 04:21

Dear Reb Eye,

Glad you are on day one now, as opposed to day zero; so sorry about the pain of disappointment in using the drug. Your posts have always given me encouragement, so I thank you for that. I love you and so I am posting these thoughts to you:

Real life is sometimes incredibly hard, all the lust/lust pleasure in the world can't *really* numb it away, it just delays the inevitable - or worse. You know this, otherwise you would not be so far into recovery as you obviously are. You are working a good Program. The parsha of life that you two are b"H living through is a very challenging one indeed. My wife points out to me every now and then that my many interests (including recovery) take valuable time away from my family and that in ten years, iy"H, we will be in a much better position for me to contribute in recovery and other areas. Of course she is right, but I get stuck in the moment and my feelings tell me that "it will always be this way and I am doomed!" Well, it got me thinking about how life really *does* change. There really are tekufos in our lives. The trick is to do the best in whatever tekufa we find ourselves. Prioritizing is a big thing here, too.

We ask Hashem every day, "v'al t'vieinu, lo lidei cheit, etc." Now, why would *Hashem* lead us to clutches of cheit?! I think that there are just times or circumstances in which it is just very likely that a person will come to cheit. Perhaps it has been habitual, perhaps he is stuck in a situation where the challenges are truly unavoidable and ubiquitous. For this guy, "success" means "staying free of big mistakes for 211 days". No more is expected. In other words, he needs to come to terms with the fact that he is actually doing just fine, even though he techincally screwed up. (see Rav Dessler on the n'kudas hab'chirah for more on this idea, but I bet you are fully aware of it...) I believe that this tefilah is designed to ask for *extra* help from Hashem to remove us or protect us from circumstances such as these. Just my opinion. But here is the real point:

Now, I know full well that the fellows with a week or two of sobriety (who are counting their brains out) and feel they have reached their imagined 'sobriety ceiling' hear this concept and might rationalize that they must be innocent for porning and masturbating their lives away....and the lives of their wives and children....***but I am not posting this to that type of guy*** - I am posting this to Reb Eye! My favorite ***Eyeball guy*** in the entire world. And I feel that you are not looking for excuses, but for '***the good life***'.

I am here to remind you that you **still** have the good life.

Alei v'hatzlach, my friend! You are on the right path, and don't be fooled, particularly by any stupid feelings. Most of my feelings are pretty stupid....

Love,

Dov

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count

Posted by Eye.nonymous - 30 May 2010 18:21

I admitted my fall to my wife.

We blocked GOOGLE on the computer.

(BTW, does anyone know how to block Google search while leaving google Mail enabled?)

And, I finally thought of a way to block my laptop (it's too old of an OS for K9 to work). Just in case.

I know, filters aren't the final destination in this struggle. But, they do help at this point.

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count

Posted by Chaim - 30 May 2010 18:40

Reb Eye

I asked Rav Nebenzhal of the Old City for chizuk in the matter of Shmiras Eynayim

He said that even if one fails 99 times and succeeds once to watch his eyes - this is also very

precious.

So the hundreds and thousands of times that you conquered your taavah in order to reach your very long streak - puts you in the Hall of Fame!

You are playing in the professional leagues (as evidenced by the toughness of your opponents!)

(From Wiki:)

In baseball, the batting average (BA) is defined as the ratio of hits to at bats.

The **all-time league average** in Major League Baseball is between .260 and .275.

(that means a little over 1 quarter of the time getting on base and 3 quarters striking out)

In modern times, a season batting average higher than .300 is considered to be excellent, and an average higher than .400 a nearly unachievable goal.

The last player to do so, was Ted Williams of the Boston Red Sox, who hit .406 in 1941

Ty Cobb holds **the record** for highest career batting average with .367

Reb Eye - *your* batting average is **over 200!**

1 fall for over 200 Grand Slams!

(compared to .400 the record in baseball - this is almost 500 times greater!)

Mida Tova 500 times more than Puranus

I respect you, for your efforts, for your honesty.

Keep alive!

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count
Posted by bardichev - 30 May 2010 20:01

the trick is not only getting

clean holy sober (you know what i mean pick your word)

the trick is not either staying clean holy and or sober

the trick is to pick yourself up when you fell

and not to think all is lost

hey thats life ups and downs

the only one who claims to be clean holy and sober always and never down

is the pope

are you a pope??

I guess not

so get off the floor drink a lchaim and keep on trucking!!!!!!

B

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Re: Eye.nonymous official count
Posted by Dov - 31 May 2010 01:26

It is great and in character with all your previous shares and growth that you and your wife are on the same page on this.

Blocking Google may be a good idea, I do not know, but - your wife? Do you not have a sponsor or a group to discuss this with? It speaks volumes and will help your own humility and honesty to be open with your wife, but she may be too nogeya b'davar to help in a healthy, long-sighted way. That is what the two of you *really* need. In my opinion. BTW, I have my wife's permission to post this. (She saw the original version and almost beat me up cuz it was a bit shtark!)

Much good stuff,

Dov

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