

A Tale of a 9th Step CallPosted by KiviYVY - 17 Mar 2011 14:33

I just made my 9th step call.

I'll admit that it was challenging to think of a person to call as I am by nature very forgiving. (I was once advised before I was married, "never go to sleep angry." and "apologize early, apologize often." I have, B"H, kept to that for our 12+ years of marriage and it was, of course, some of the best advice I've ever received.) When I filled out my resentment sheets I honestly had much difficulty extracting painful memories and I believe many of the ones I listed were a bit contrived. If I felt they were silly in my head, I certainly saw them as silly on paper. The only person I thought I should make amends with was my boss. I have resented a number of things he's done over the years and while I've forgiven him and come to see him as just someone who has some personal issues with anger and ego, I felt there was room to improve in our relationship and that the ill feelings I had were taking up valuable space in my brain.

Before calling I had many thoughts of how such a call would go. I first thought that he would think I was insane for making amends, especially so far from Chodesh Elul, and that he would have no idea what I was referring to. I also thought he would push me for details of my resentments, which I thought would be harmful to share. I listened to these and many other reservations echoed on the phone conferences with Steve and Duvid Chaim and I eventually found some justification for making this call. Honestly, that was not enough to push me to make the call. I had to draw from a precious attitude I've recently recognized and have been putting into use. I'd like to call it the "Just be crazy" method. I love being crazy and playful around my kids and they really latch onto that expression of joy in our home. I figured I could use that power within me for other things and I applied it to situations where I know what G-d wants from me, but I'm just scared to move forward, weighed down by rationalizations of all sorts. At those times I say "Just be crazy" - don't think about it and take the plunge. Period. Well, I used that method this morning and I made the call. I wrote up **the following script** before calling and basically read from it (as my lips quivered):

"This is a difficult thing to say, but I think it's important.

I feel I have to admit that I've **had some ill feelings towards you** and **I sincerely regret that.**

Y'know - I think it's **effected our relationship**, both business and personal. I'm just wondering if there's **anything I can do to make it better?**"

[I also had the following prepared in case he pressed me for more]

"I had come to realize that you're under a lot of pressure, especially having to meet payroll and with all the things that have been happening in the Company recently. I should really be more grateful and understanding. When things come up that I might resent - not important to go into details - I'm trying to be more understanding. I'd like to clear the air, move ahead and make things better."

I made the call and it went exceedingly well. B"H I caught him at a great time. He heard me out, paused, and then asked what drove me to call him. I pretty much repeated myself and said "I've had these feelings and I regret them. I just want to know if there's anything I can do to make things better." He then went on to acknowledge that it's possible that there was some friction and he admitted he had a part in it. I almost slipped into confirming his part, but I pretty much kept the focus on my making things better. We then spoke about some things we're planning to do with the company, our hopes for the future, and how we both hope to work together on this. He said he'd like to continue the conversation later today. [End of call]

Wow - I survived, and Hashem's help was so obvious. I should have said a Tefilla beforehand, but I certainly asked for His help in my mind. Well - He helped anyway and BE"H this call will be a springboard for a new business and personal relationship with my boss. I'm really looking forward and I'm starting to feel proud to be working with my boss and for this company. Hodu Lashem Ki Tov, Ki L'Olam Chasdo!!

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Re: A Tale of a 9th Step Call

Posted by Yosef Hatzadik - 17 Mar 2011 21:55

Are there any positions open for new employees in your company?

I would LOVE to have a coworker such as you!

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Re: A Tale of a 9th Step Call

Posted by Serene smile - 03 May 2011 08:12

Wow! :-) 'just be crazy' has basically become life for me.. If I seek any simcha at all, I don't really have a choice but to be that way. I once learned that is this generation, "the world is SO crazy with tumah, the only way a yid will have real hatzlocha, will only be with craziness in kedusha.. To act 'irrationally' for Hashem.. Not to make 'calculations' of 'what will be if', but just to 'do what's right to bring kindness and honesty' and with this approach, we are guaranteed to see open miracles from our loving G-d".. This story is just even more inspiration of this attitude. Very often, I like to "jump: and then grow wings as I'm falling"

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Re: A Tale of a 9th Step Call

Posted by KiviYVY - 03 May 2011 13:45

[Yosef Hatzadik wrote on 17 Mar 2011 21:55:](#)

Are there any positions open for new employees in your company?

I would LOVE to have a coworker such as you!

Thanks YH! I don't think we have anything open now, but the feelings are mutual!

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Re: A Tale of a 9th Step Call

Posted by KiviYVY - 03 May 2011 13:50

[Serene smile wrote on 03 May 2011 08:12:](#)

Wow! :-) 'just be crazy' has basically become life for me.. If I seek any simcha at all, I don't really have a choice but to be that way. I once learned that is this generation, "the world is SO crazy with tumah, the only way a yid will have real hatzlocha, will only be with craziness in kedusha.. To act 'irrationally' for Hashem.. Not to make 'calculations' of 'what will be if', but just to 'do what's right to bring kindness and honesty' and with this approach, we are guaranteed to see open miracles from our loving G-d".. This story is just even more inspiration of this attitude. Very often, I like to "jump: and then grow wings as I'm falling"

SS - I'm so glad you picked up on that. I am so not the type to follow this philosophy, which I think explains why it works so well for me and perhaps for you too. Since my nature is to be super conservative, justifying all choices to move forward, it balances out the dangers of the "just be crazy" method. I think we'd all agree that a touch of caution is healthy and that "just be crazy" with no caution can be quite risky. So for all those like me - yes - just be crazy!!

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Re: A Tale of a 9th Step Call

Posted by Serene smile - 03 May 2011 14:10

Yes: generally, balance and etiquette. But sometimes when necessary, especially w/the children, 'just be crazy'.. B'kitzur, my 7 year old was really chutzpah w/a smile.. I always avoid hitting, but here I was about to. So I got right in his face and said "you want to wrestle!?" The glow of shock and wonder in his eyes shined bright as the sun. He said "yes!".. "Clean up the enitre mess, help your mother, and we're on!" I said... The whole room was clean in 3 minutes, and BH(!) We have a happy boy who learns well and is happy to see his father :-)...

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Re: A Tale of a 9th Step Call

Posted by heuni memass - 05 May 2011 20:36

Gotta try that one with my son! It's always good to have some of those in the pocket when we r not sure how to react.

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Re: A Tale of a 9th Step Call

Posted by KiviYVY - 05 May 2011 21:06

I'm just curious who one the wrestling match! He probably LET Tatty win...

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Re: A Tale of a 9th Step Call

Posted by Serene smile - 05 May 2011 21:53

Chovos ha'livavos dissuades hitting kids and it's probably a no brainer these days the negative effects it has. BH! Yes he likes when I pick him & roll on the floor a bit. Not too long, and not 'too' wild: just enough to get a little stress out of him. And BH again that we can talk about these inyanim here! I happen to have a head of MUSH right now, but that's ok.. Soon time to daven :-) super grateful,... So super grateful

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Re: A Tale of a 9th Step Call

Posted by Serene smile - 19 May 2011 13:15

This is somewhat similar to the '9th step call' and it's true so it seems good to share bissele more recovery in action...

My immediate manager is a very hard working older woman in her late 50's. She likes my

personality; we work well together (no sa related stuff, BH)..

BUT(!)... She's an aggressive frum workaholic! Just like 'one of the guys'. She pounds on the table ALL DAY, upset about 'this and that' and 'getting things done! Etc... VERY loudly!

Yesterday I 'gave in' to her 'anger', in order to help her resolve something: or so I thought! In 5 seconds, her & I were in a screaming match about 'the issue'.

What? Do I wake up in order to be screaming at people? No way baby. My system don't get along w/anger at all.

So I sent her this email before work today..(And purposely came in late)...

"Mrs....,

Do you realize how many, many fathers I know who have lost their families and all brochos by 'working like a horse who pounds on the desk all day'? It may indeed work for you, but if I'm gonna start pounding, huffing, biting and grinding my teeth, and feeling hate towards someone while I fake smile and talk to them, it's only gonna be over helping more yiddeshe neshomas, not over gelt.

BH I've seen wondrous miracles choosing a calm attitude towards life (obviously while showing up on time and doing the best I can) with a smile. I've seen time and time again how, while trying to control everything we yidden actually PREVENT greater miracles from coming to us.

If you need me to 'huff and puff' also, then maybe it's better to have someone else work with you: someone more 'normal' who realizes the value of 'stress' and aggravation as part of a happy daily jewish experience.

See u soon "

When I got to work, she called me to a quiet area of the office, apologized, and said "I'm very stressed out, I know. I like working with u. Keep a pushka on ur desk. Every time I bang from anger I'm gonna put a dollar in. I'll learn. I'm sorry"... The rest of the day BH was a normal day with normal headaches.. No aggressive anger...

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Re: A Tale of a 9th Step Call

Posted by KiviYVY - 19 May 2011 14:03

That took quite a lot of courage SS! B"H it worked out in the end - these personal encounters make it so obvious that H' runs the world and is so heavily involved, Kavayachol, in our intimate lives.

I was a bit surprised that you chose to put the focus on her part as opposed to your own and I'm relieved that she reacted well to it. She's obviously a growing person and you seem to have hit a spiritual cord with her. Did you consider Davening for Hashem's help and saying something to the effect of "our business relationship is very important to me, there's so much that we have accomplished and can accomplish together. I have come to realize that I might have disrupted that relationship somewhat and I truly regret doing that. What can I do to make things better?" My experience has been that, BE"H, it works miracles. Even al pi Tevah, people really react well when the spotlight is put on the relationship and the others willingness to improve it, as opposed to their own part in disrupting the relationship.

I'm curious to hear your thoughts!

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Re: A Tale of a 9th Step Call

Posted by Serene smile - 19 May 2011 16:07

Yes. I apologized too.. Just life is fast and I can't write everything all the time :-).. Ur %100 right!

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Re: A Tale of a 9th Step Call

Posted by Serene smile - 25 May 2011 03:00

Just more experience w/children. Literally every single night of their lives (except for when they are away w/a relative), I go and gently stroke my children's heads as they are sleeping, and rub their back. One of them used to really let out a big 'sigh of relief' whenever I did it. He was 5(?) At the time. Recovery has blessed me with a sensitivity to 'be present' emotionally for them (except for the really stressful days when I tell them "today tatty needs a time out and I need to think about Hashem for a little: of course my daughter still feels completely justified for climbing on me even in these times too... And I have no problem with it).. I've learned to 'davka' look at them when I'm in a good mood and take pleasure in whatever they're doing (to a point obviously :-)) so in their minds they internalize deeeeeeeep inside of them that "tatty is someone who is really happy with me: he enjoys me..the world enjoys.. 'Me'." BH this approach is so far showing many many fruits.

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Re: A Tale of a 9th Step Call

Posted by David712 - 03 Jun 2016 02:05

[Serene smile wrote on 19 May 2011 13:15:](#)

When I got to work, she called me to a quiet area of the office, apologized, and said "I'm very stressed out, I know. I like working with u. Keep a pushka on ur desk. Every time I bang from anger I'm gonna put a dollar in. I'll learn. I'm sorry"... The rest of the day BH was a normal day with normal headaches.. No aggressive anger...

Love that -great story.

"Just be crazy"

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