



Guardyoureyes.org

Maintaining Moral Purity in Today's World

Anecdotes, Tips, Torah & Chizuk from **Rebbe Nachman of Breslov**

On Shmiras Habris & Tikkun Habris

A collection of articles and posts shared on the GYE network (www.guardyoureyes.org) by the members of the GYE community on the websites, forums and daily chizuk e-mails.



Donations are tax deductible. Checks can be made out to: "GYE Corp." and mailed to:
GYE Corp. 3918 Fallstaff Rd, Baltimore, MD 21215, U.S.A. / On-line Donations: www.GuardYourEyes.org
E-mail: eyes.guard@gmail.com / Tel (USA): 646-600-8100 / Israel: 972-2-5805921

The **Tikkun HaClalli** of Rabbi Nachman is a powerful group of Psalms which rectify the damage caused from sins related to the Brit. The Psalms to recite are: **16, 32, 41, 42, 59,77, 90, 105, 137, 150**. Rabbi Nachman guarantees that they do a great rectification, and he said that revealing this Tikkun was one of his greatest chiddushim.

If one has a copy of the Tikun HaClalli with the confession printed at the end, it is best to say the Tikun in full. If not, then after reciting the Psalms, one should beg Hashem, in his or her own words, to grant forgiveness from all sexual transgressions and to rectify, in His great compassion, all of the terrible blemishes that our transgressions caused.

The Yetzer Hara's biggest tool in getting people to sin, is depression. Always remain happy, no matter what. This parable from Rebbe Nachman can help.

Rabbi Nachman's Secret of Happiness by Rabbi Nasan Maimon



Long ago, Rabbi Nachman of Breslov had recognized Simcha as the key to success in religion and coming truly close to HaShem. In stressing the importance of Simcha he went so far as saying that depression - the antithesis of Simcha - constitutes "the main bite of the serpent (the Yetzer Hara)". How far should a person struggle to remain steadfast and avoid depression? The lesson is best illustrated by the following story Rabbi Nachman told to his disciples:

"But what is the antidote for the person who feels so heavy, so depressed, that no words of encouragement or advice have any effect?"

There was once a poor man who earned a living digging clay and selling it. Once, while digging clay, he discovered a precious stone which was obviously worth a great deal. Since he had no idea of it's worth, he took it to an expert to tell him its value. The expert answered, "No one here will be able to afford such a stone. Go to London, the capital, and there you will be able to sell it." The man was so poor that he could not afford to make the journey. He sold everything he had, and went from house to house, collecting funds for the trip. Finally he had enough to take him as far as the sea.

He then went to board a ship, but he did not have any money. He went to the ship's captain and showed him the jewel. The captain immediately welcomed him aboard the ship with great honor, assuming he was a very trustworthy person. He gave the poor man a special first class cabin, and treated him like a wealthy personage. The poor man's cabin had a view of the sea, and he sat there, constantly looking at the diamond and rejoicing. He was especially particular to do this during his meals, since eating in good spirits is highly beneficial for digestion. Then one day, he sat down to eat, with the diamond lying in front of him on the table where he could enjoy it. Sifting there he dozed off. Meanwhile, the mess boy came and cleared the table, shaking the tablecloth

with its crumbs and the diamond into the sea. When he woke up and realized what had happened, he almost went mad with grief. Besides, the captain was a ruthless man who would not hesitate to kill him for his fare. Having no other choice, he continued to act happy, as if nothing had happened. The captain would usually speak to him a few hours every day, and on this day, he put himself in good spirits, so that the captain was not aware that anything was wrong. The captain said to him, "I want to buy a large quantity of wheat and I will be able to sell it in London for a huge profit. But I am afraid that I will be accused of stealing from the king's treasury. Therefore, I will arrange for the wheat to be bought in your name. I will pay you well for your trouble." The poor man agreed. But as soon as they arrived in London the captain died. The entire shipload of wheat was in the poor man's name and it was worth many times as much as the diamond.

Rabbi Nachman concluded, "The diamond did not belong to the poor man, and the proof is that he did not keep it. The wheat, however, did belong to him, and the proof is that he kept it. But he got what he deserved only because he remained happy.

It is up to each of us never to lose hope, and like the poor man in the story to whom everything appeared lost, force oneself to be happy. Even a faked, ungentle, happiness, has the power to transform our situation and lead us to genuine joy.

But what is the antidote for the person who feels so heavy, so depressed, that no words of encouragement or advice have any effect? To the one who feels he has reached the end of his rope ... feeling so low and discouraged about himself that he can only term himself "dead." Rabbi Nachman throws a lifeline: He stresses the statement of the Gemara that in the future, Hashem will resurrect the entire body through a certain bone known as the "Luz". Invisible to the eye, the Luz defies destruction. Placed on a stone and pounded repeatedly with a sledgehammer, eventually the sledgehammer will break in two and the stone will shatter into a thousand pieces - but the Luz will remain intact and unharmed. "Thus we see," says Rabbi Nachman, "that no matter how low a person has fallen, there exists an indestructible part in him, that can form the basis for a new resurrection - a new life."

Focus on your Luz, advises Rabbi Nachman. Ask HaShem to help you find that indestructible part, that essence of yourself that no sin or misfortune can erase. Bind yourself to it. Concentrate on it. Allow it to gladden you and make you happy. Then, even if you find yourself in the deepest, darkest pit without the slightest trace of hope or light - still, you will always find your way out.

On a larger scale, the failure to find the "good point," is responsible for undermining all our relationships-especially in marriage. All conflict arises from an inability to see the good in another person. Fault-finders abound.

The key is, explains Rabbi Nachman, to zero in on the good point -- the pure, untarnishable, indestructible, utterly redeeming feature that exists in each and every one of us, and use it to rebuild our image of others and ourselves.

Ki Besimcha Taitzayhu - "through simcha you will go out," the posuk says. It is simcha that shines a light for a person, releasing him from any type of exile.

In the zechus of this great Tzaddik who taught this lesson of Simcha may Hashem allow us to exit from our present galus, with the coming of Moshiach and the rebuilding of the Bais Hamikdash speedily in our days. Amain.

The Breslov approach to Tikkun Habrit

Very often, a spiritual decline is preparation for a significant ascent, as Rebbe Nachman and Reb Nossou often remind us in their writings.

If a person failed to break his fall in time and has transgressed clear prohibitions, he must be prepared to deal even with this. In Likutei Moharan II:12, Rebbe Nachman tells us that when one is in the lowest of depths, stuck in the mire, he has a special opportunity to find the highest levels of holiness which are hidden there - but only if he is firmly resolved to search for God.

Not only is despair pointless, it can also lead to falling to further depths. But how can anyone escape despair when he understands the seriousness of these moral transgressions? How can a person not despair when the Zohar (219b) states that repentance does not help when it comes to the sin of Er and Onan?

Rebbe Nachman states (Sichot Haran 71) that the Zohar should not be understood literally. Repentance always helps, and the main thing is not to repeat one's wrong doing.

Rebbe Nachman declared that one can completely rectify this sin if after repenting he goes to the mikveh and then recites ten particular Psalms (16, 32, 41, 42, 59, 77, 90, 105, 137, 150) to rectify the damage of that transgression. (Earlier tzaddikim attempted to find ways to rectify this sin. See for example the Shl"ta and Yesod Yosef, written by Rabbi Yosef ben Shlomo of Posen, dealing mainly with this topic. But they would not guarantee that their recommendations would completely correct the problem). Afterwards, a person should continue striving towards perfection without worrying about this episode.

These ten Psalms are known as the Tikkun Haklali. In Likutei Moharan I:29 Rabbi Nachman explained that to rectify all of a person's transgressions is very difficult, but if he can rectify the transgressions associated with the Brit, which encompasses all the other transgressions, he will thus rectify all of them. Therefore rectification of the Brit is called the general rectification – Tikkun Haklali.

In addition, Rebbe Nachman stated that these ten Psalms have a special power and declared before two witnesses that if a person recites these Psalms at his grave in Uman and donates a *pruta* (a tiny amount of money) to charity in Rebbe Nachman's honor, then Rebbe Nachman will make every effort to help that person escape from the depths, no matter how deeply he had fallen.

[Click here for the Ten Psalms of the Tikkun Haklali on-line.](#)

R' Nachman writes that every Jewish soul is connected with the 70 holy souls that went down to Mitzrayim with Yaakov Avinu, which correspond to the 70 facets of the Torah. And on the side of impurity are the 70 nations of the world, with each nation representing another evil trait or worldly desire. **And the desire for sexual transgression is the all-encompassing trait that represents all 70 evil traits and desires.** And then R' Nachman writes, that he who succeeds in conquering this desire will find all the other desires of the world easy to conquer, and he will be worthy of having the secrets of the Torah revealed to him. (Likutei Maharar, 36)



The Tightrope

The GYE Logo is that of a man on a tightrope. This is based on the famous saying of *Rebbe Nachman*: "***The whole world is a very thin bridge, and the main thing is not to be afraid at all***".

There was a deep and lively discussion recently on the forum (starting on [this page](#) and continuing on to the next page) where a number of the members were contemplating whether "worrying" about our struggle was necessary and/or healthy for our recovery. After much give and take, we came to an agreement that there are two types of "worry". There is the "worry" that we **should** have, and there's the "worry" that we **shouldn't** have.

1) The "worry" that we **should** have is a deep recognition of the mortal danger we are in if we continue down the path of lust addiction. We must know and internalize how lust is a poison, and that if we don't take the proper steps to break free of its insidious grip, it will end up destroying our lives. This type of "worry" is actually the core of Step No. 1 (of the 12-Steps) i.e. admitting powerlessness and realizing that our lives have become unmanageable. We must have this "worry" from the very first moment of our journey and on throughout our entire lives, with the knowledge that if we do not continue to do **whatever it takes** to remain sober, we are in grave danger indeed.

2) But then there is a second type of "worry", which some people **might think** should be used as a practical tool to remain clean. And that is, to worry whether we'll really make it or not, to worry about how we've failed so many times in the past, or to worry about whether the steps we are taking will be truly helpful or not, etc... This type of worry - I think we all agreed, is very unhealthy for us in our day-to-day struggles. Instead, we should never dwell on the past **or** be concerned about what the future may hold. We should focus **only** on the present, and have complete faith that our sincere efforts are what Hashem wants us to do in this present moment. And we should trust fully in Him to succeed as a baby trusts in its mother, without fear or questions.

It occurred to me later how profound the words of Rebbe Nachman are! For in this short saying that we quoted above, Rebbe Nachman addresses BOTH these types of worry. As he says: "***The whole world is a very thin bridge***" meaning; we must be very deeply aware of how precarious our situation is, and to make sure that we are taking steps in the right direction. But in the very same breath, Rebbe Nachman goes on to explain what those steps are: "***And the main thing is - the secret to success is - not to fear at all!***" **Never look down from the tightrope!** Just put one foot in front of the other and hold on to G-d with all your heart!

RENEWAL

Rav Nachman writes that the key to doing teshuvah and breaking the averiros that we are addicted to, is believing in change, rejuvenation and renewal. We must believe that the ME from yesterday does not have to be the ME of today. We can always renew ourselves.

Category: Tips > Spiritual/Torah
From Chizuk e-mail #997

Vanquishing Bad Thoughts is the Key to Teshuvah

Sent in by Rabbi Daniel Morris

How can a person fix all the mistakes he made in the past? How can one undo the damage of shmiras einyayim and shmiras habris?

One of the types of tshuva mentioned in the rishonim is called "tshuvas hamishkal", the "tshuva of weighing." This type of tshuva involves causing oneself suffering to "balance off" the pleasure one had when sinning. Through fasting and other types of breaking one's desires one atones for the enjoyment he had when sinning.

Our generation is weak, and it is impossible for us to fast and afflict ourselves. Someone of our generation might easily conclude that tshuvas hamishkal was a madreiga for the great ones of long ago, and has no meaning for us today.

Look, however, at the tremendous light cast for us by Rebbe Nachman of Breslav (Likutei Eitzos, Machshavos V'hirhurim, os beis): *"When thoughts of znus come to a person's mind, **and he breaks his taava and removes his mind from them--this is the main tshuva and reparation for having blemished his bris--that each person blemished in his own way. This is considered actual "tshuvas hamishkal". Therefore a person should not become discouraged when he sees that impure thoughts are afflicting him, even if they are awful and embarrassing. To the contrary, this exactly is where the key to his tshuva and reparation lies. Specifically through this test, that impure thoughts come to him and he vanquishes them (and shortly I will share with you his advice about how to do this) - specifically here is the key to his salvation, as I have explained. Through passing this test he draws out the sparks of holiness that fell through the blemish he created; he merits to repair his bris; he further merits to purify his wisdom and his voice; he merits peace; and he merits to draw the entire world to the service of Hashem."***

A little further in the same section (osyud aleph), Rebbe Nachman explains to us how to vanquish these thoughts with an eitzah astounding in its truth and simplicity: *"**The rule is that it is totally impossible for a person to think two different thoughts at the same time.** Therefore a person can easily banish impure thoughts without actively confronting them. That is, he can elect not to think the wrong thought, rather to think about something else concerning Torah or service of Hashem, or even business or some other subject. In this way he will automatically ("m'meila") free himself from any negative thought that comes to him, for, as we said, it is definitely impossible to think two different thoughts at the same time. I have already explained that it is unnecessary to shake one's head this way and that in order to banish bad thoughts, for this is completely ineffective. Just think another thought, as we said, and don't look back."*

And a bit further (ois tes-zayin), Rebbe Nachman gives us a powerful moshol: *"A person's thoughts are in his hand to turn as he wills, to any place he wishes; as I have explained to you, it is impossible to think two different thoughts at the same time. Even if sometimes a person's thoughts fly away and explore strange, unwelcome subjects, a person has the power to turn his thoughts, to force them onto the straight path, to think about fitting subjects. This is identical to a horse that turns from one path to another, that you can grasp hold of the reigns to return it to the desired path. So too mamash are a person's thoughts, that as soon as he sees himself turning from the proper path, he can direct them onto the proper path."*

I hope you find these eitzos helpful. May we merit to do true tshuva and to purify our thoughts completely. Amen.

Prayers to be saved from these desires

Never underestimate the power of heartfelt prayer before G-d. Without G-d's constant assistance, we would not be able to win the battle against this tenacious enemy. Prayers from the heart can be said in the language you know best. To illustrate, here is the translation of a prayer based on an excerpt from the writings of Rabbi Natan, the foremost student of Rebbe Nachman of Breslov, from the book, "Likutei Tefillot:"

"May it be Your will, my G-d and G-d of my fathers, that I merit in Your great mercy and kindness to cleanse my mind of foreign thoughts and false wisdoms, that I not pollute and derange my mind with lusts and sexual fantasies, G-d forbid. And that I not infest my brain with lusts and evil fantasies, and that I not have any unholy thoughts at all. Rather let my thoughts be clean, refined, and pure, without doing anything to cause unholy thoughts to lodge there in the holy chamber of my brain, which is like the Holy of Holies. Give me the strength to overcome all evil thoughts and fantasies that come to confuse my mind, especially the evil thoughts that I have brought upon myself by not guarding my sight, and by looking at illicit images.

"Let me not give room at all in my mind to such polluted thoughts and deeds, which distance me from You with a horrible distance. Have mercy upon me, my G-d, for I know the terrible damage these evil thoughts cause in all of the upper spiritual worlds which are always connected to my mind through the awesome interconnectedness of Your creation, and which sever me from Your holiness, and from the holiness of Israel, the source of my life. You alone know the great and terrible lust which overcomes me, confusing my mind again and again, polluting my very being until my mind is completely filled with evil fantasies. And not only have I not overcome these evil inclinations, but I myself brought them upon myself through my wanton doings, when I knew that this unholy behavior wasn't Your will for Your holy Jewish People. Woe is me for the days that I have wasted in sin."

"Therefore, my G-d, and G-d of my fathers, I come before you with a broken and sorrowful heart, humbling myself before Your Kingship, appealing to Your mercy like a poor man at the gates, that You forgive me in Your abundant kindness, though I be undeserving, and that You bring me from darkness to light, and that you help me from this day forth to sanctify my thoughts. May I be successful in banishing these polluted thoughts from my mind, and avoiding like fire anything that awakens evil fantasies and lust in my heart and my brain. Give me the strength to overcome my evil inclinations, and may my thoughts be always holy and sanctified in Your service. Amen."

("Likutei Tefillot," 1:4)

Translation taken from www.jewishsexuality.com

Advice of Rabbi Nachman of Breslov (From Likutei Etzot, Thoughts and Fantasies, 4).

"Therefore, when sexual fantasies come upon one's thoughts, and the person breaks his passion and averts his thoughts from them, this is his main t'shuva and the principle manner that he rectifies his past transgressions to the Brit, each person according to his deeds. This is doing repentance measure for measure. Thus, a person shouldn't become depressed when he sees that wicked and ugly sexual fantasies are overwhelming him. On the contrary – this is his way of repentance and rectification, for precisely when these fantasies coming to him now and he overcomes them, this is his main t'shuva and tikun, and in this manner, he liberates sparks of holiness that fell into impurity through transgressions to the Brit. This is the way he merits to rectify the Brit."

From Reb Nachman's Wisdom #6

The evil urge is similar to a prankster running through a crowd showing his tightly closed hand. No one knows what it is he is holding. He goes up to each person and asks, "What do you suppose I have in my hand?" Each person imagines that the closed hand has in it just what he desires most. They all hurry and run after the prankster. Then, when he has tricked them enough, that they are following him, he opens his hand. It is completely empty! The same is true of the evil one. He tricks the world, fooling them into following him. Everyone thinks that his hand contains what they need. In the end, the evil one opens his hand. There is nothing in it and no desire is ever fulfilled. Worldly pleasures are just like sunbeams in a dark room. They may actually seem solid, but when a person tries to grasp a sunbeam they find nothing in their hand. The same is true of all worldly desires.

It is written in Pirkei Avos "*Let the poor be members of your household and don't talk much with women*". R' Nachman says that the *Mishna* is hinting to us a secret, namely, that *Tzedaka* is a great *segulah* not to come to sexual fantasies. Even so, continues R' Nachman, the *Mishna* is exhorting us not to talk much with women, because this *segulah* is only good to save a person from fantasies if he does not talk with women more than he needs to. And R' Nachman continues, that this is also the meaning of the words "*Tzedaka Tatzil Mi'Maves*" - "*Tzedaka saves from death*". For sexual fantasies, explains R' Nachman, are death itself.

On a practical level, if one commits (for a week at a time) to donate 25 cents to *Tzedaka* each time he lets himself dwell on a sexual fantasy, he will likely see good progress. Not only may this help psychologically to prevent him dwelling on such thoughts, but by donating the money to *Tzedaka* one will also be fulfilling the *segulah* and thereby prevent further thoughts from coming as well!

Rebbe Nachman says that sexual desire is the great test a man faces in this world. (Rabbi Nachman's Wisdom 115) The Rebbe said that he was able to overcome this desire but he had to cry out to Hashem again and again. The temptations were very real for him but he later said, "A man with even the smallest amount of real intelligence, will not find this a temptation at all." The Satan wanted so much for him to slip on this desire that he was willing to let the Rebbe overcome every other desire if only he would slip up on this once. The Rebbe did the opposite though, and said he would ignore his other desires and not work to control them at all, but the sexual desire he would completely eradicate (Shevachay Haran 16). As a young man, even amidst the fire burning inside him, he overcame this desire completely. He later said, "I do not have any feeling of desire at all. Men and women are all the same to me." When he came in contact with a woman, he didn't even have an extraneous thought. (ibid)

From Chizuk e-mail 315:

R' Nachman writes that the *Tikkun* for sexual fantasies is to be *Mechadesh Chidushai Torah*. And he explains that the reason for this is because fantasy comes through a person's "imagination", therefore, by working out new insights in Torah through the power of the imagination (i.e. by comparing one thing to another), one fixes the spiritual damage that he caused through the imagination of improper fantasies and causes his imagination to become holy.

From Chizuk e-mail 333:

A Member shares:

Last year while learning Baba Metzia, the Rav gave an incredible explanation of the concept of 'kinyan'. He drew from Rebbe Nachman and other sources and described that there are many levels by which a person can 'acquire' something. a) A person can see something, desire it and become slightly attached to it. b) He can state aloud, 'it's mine'. c) He can pick it up. d) He can sign a document of acquisition. These examples exist along a continuum of 'acquisition', from the most shallow to the most deep and enduring.

Ultimately, our soul is here to acquire our body (and its associated physicality in the world) in order to fulfill the soul's purpose. Our souls all signed a contract when we came into the world. The soul needs the body and its associated physicality in order to fulfill this contract.

And as I walk through the world, I can acquire things cheaply and shallowly, or I can really invest in them and they become part of me. Ultimately, true fulfillment of purpose comes from having real relationships with the things or people in my life, in a way that contributes to the fulfillment of the soul's purpose. The shallow 'acquisitions' that I make, don't contribute to real fulfillment. Quite the opposite. They create a cloud of confusion about my soul's purpose in the world. **Clarity and truth are what bring fulfillment.** It's only when I'm truly connected to that which is relevant to my soul's purpose that I can accomplish that purpose, and feel fulfilled in this world and ly"H in the next. The shallow 'acquisitions' that come from looking with my eyes and their desires, are like the cloud that confounds and confuses my consciousness, preventing me from seeing that which is truly relevant - or Shaiyach - to my soul.

So as I walk around the world, I make a practice of reminding myself that real fulfillment comes from attaching myself to that which is Shaiyach. And with the help of G-d, I remind myself when I notice my eyes going after desires, '**Not Shaiyach**'. And if it's not shaiyach, there's no real fulfillment, just confusion.

So try it. Keep in mind a phrase that evokes to you something like 'this object of desire is not relevant or connected to my soul, and in fact will just bring confusion'. For me, the phrase is '**Not Shaiyach**'.

Thanks for all these great tips and posts. They are ly"H truly strengthening my avodah in the area of attaching my soul to that which is relevant, and clearing it of the confusing attachments that are not relevant.

From Chizuk e-mail 334:

A member shares:

I saw in the Le'kutei Moran (Torah 25) an unbelievable Limud that pertains to all of us. (The following is my Hakdamah): We have our ups, and then our downs. Then we go up again and down again. Sometimes when we start to fall, we get depressed, and maybe even say, "Ribbono Shel Olam, why have you left me to fall again?! Especially after all of my hard work and strides to cleanse myself. Was everything I worked for a complete loss?"

So, Rabbi Nachman Zt"l states that there is not one Yid that is on the same madreiga (level) as another yid. Everyone of us is standing on our own madreiga. Then, when we begin to rise to the next higher level, we are in fact taking over the place of the one who was previously above us. Each level has its own klippot (impure husks) that must be dealt with and must be subjugated by us. The one who was on the higher level before us was successful to win the battle over these klipot on his level, but now when he goes up one rung, and I begin to go up as well and take over

his place, these klipot become alive once again, and it is up to me to subjugate them. This is the struggle that I am feeling. This is all of the Taivos that start to enter my head again. It is these klipot that are waiting for me at the next level UP. Yes, the previous Neshamah that was there succeeded to put them under control (he beat them and conquered this level), but now we must do this once again for ourselves. This is part of GOING UPPPPPP!

This is incredible. I always use to think that I was doing good, and then after several weeks, all of sudden I could feel the lusts and thoughts coming into my mind, and I feared that I was falling down again, and that I was going to lose everything I had gained. But in reality, **these renewed lusts and thoughts were really due to the fact that I was approaching the next level UP!!** I was going up, NOT down. I was in fact battling for new territory!

From Chizuk e-mail 374:

The first step in joining our community is to get the concept of "giving up" out of your lexicon. There is no such thing.

These two sayings of Rebbe Nachman are the GYE motto:

- 1) ***If you believe you can destroy, believe you can fix.***
- 2) ***There is no such thing as Yush in the world.***

From Chizuk e-mail 382:

Question: *I've given up the bad stuff already for a few months, but I still feel far from learning to control my eyes. When we see a beautiful girl, and we really KNOW that it's really nothing, but it affects our senses, how in the world can we deal with that? I mean, it feels like we have to forgo the most beautiful things in this world! I know it's possible, but it's so painful sometimes.*

Answer: R' Nachman once said that the entire strength of the Yetzer Hara is through "*dimyon*" - imagination, and he said that we should change the Yetzer Hara's name to "*Ha'Medameh*" (Likutei Maharar; Torah 25)

This whole desire is a blown up bubble of hot-air, built around what we see and imagine in the mind. Experience has shown us all, that as soon as we get what we thought we wanted -- what we thought was going to be absolutely incredible (according to what we saw and fantasized), the bubble pops and all that's left is "hot air". And we are left shaking our head and not believing that for this we were willing to sell our very souls.

So in essence, the fact that we struggle so much with *shmiras ainayim* and all these powerful fantasies, and the fact that it feels like it takes such effort give our hearts over to Hashem - **this all is really Hashem's greatest gift to us.** Let me explain what I mean:

If we would just be like those who don't care and give in and get all that they desire, we would have NOTHING at the end. Do you think they have joy from this? Did you ever see a non-Jew walking around happy because he gets whatever he wants? The minute it's over, they are left disillusioned and seeking other pleasures to fill the void they feel. So think about it. Hashem has chosen us and uplifted us from the filth of the world, and given us the opportunity to make all these "valiant" struggles every time we turn away from looking at something the Yetzer Hara wants us to look at - just so that Hashem can embrace us and reward us with eternal divine light. But what is the alternative, i.e. if we would give in? Nothing! Emptiness and disillusionment! The Yetzer Hara promises so much, but he delivers nothing! So this whole blown up desire that we have and all these difficult struggles not to look, etc... it's really all a "game" that Hashem is

playing with us. He makes us **feel** as if we are "ripping out our hearts" for him - and he indeed rewards us AS IF we have sacrificed our hearts on the alter, and he allows us to come closer to him than any non-Jew could dream of coming, and yet, it's all a game. Because **if one would be able to see in advance the way he would feel after he would give in, he wouldn't even have a struggle!!**

That is perhaps what Chaza"l meant when they said that one day the Tzadikim will weep with joy that they were able to overcome the mountain of the Yetzer Hara, and Resha'im will weep that they couldn't overcome this little string of the Yetzer Hara. One may ask, how could the Yetzer Hara be both things, which is the real truth? Well, based on the above, it could be that the Tzadikim are talking about the "mountain" that the Yetzer Hara "FELT LIKE" - when they didn't give in. But the Resha'im are seeing the little "nothing" that the Yetzer Hara really was when they actually gave in.

So it's really all a game of Hashem's kindness and love for us. Hashem is only asking of us to overcome a "small string", but he makes it LOOK like a mountain so that we can be worthy of coming close to him and receive the tremendous reward he wants to give us!

If you remember this important idea, you will stay be able to stay strong even in what "feels like" the most difficult moments!

From Chizuk e-mail 383:

I want to share an inspiring story that someone sent us. (By the time I had finished reading the story, I was crying):

I first discovered masturbation at about age 15, when a fellow yeshiva student showed me smut. Before hand I had never even considered it at all, I had never even thought of women. This went on for years, and every Rosh Hashana I would swear that I would stop. When I got married I was certain that I would find salvation, but I became even worse, convincing my wife that she could even help me masturbate (when she was ASSUR to me, or didn't want to be intimate) and that she was saving me from AVERAH by the fact that she was involved (so it was "love"). This came after a point when the Yetzer had already convinced me that there was no possibility of abstinence, and I was sure that it was an impossible test made up by some Rabbis, based on an obscure passage in the Torah. I only used the computer to finish the job.

My Torah life, which was very dry and had no connection to Hashem, slowly started to come alive through the very medium that all the Tumah was coming through, and slowly Rebbe Nachman entered my life. Both me and my wife loved hearing shiurim together and I was slowly becoming a better person, husband and father, but I was still was living with the conviction that masturbation was inevitable.

Then one Shabbos, a friend of mine taught me about HITBOBEDUT (Torah 25 in the second half of Likutai Moharan) and he admitted to me how he had once spent time in front of the computer doing forbidden things. "You too?!!" I asked. "But you're a big Tzadik!" He told me how he had been religious on the outside but his inside was totally devoid of Hashem. He had gone to Uman and begged to be cleaned, and at the point of our conversation he was clean already 10 months.

I took this to heart and realized what was missing. I HAD NEVER EVEN CONSIDERED ASKING HASHEM FOR HELP, I WAS TRYING TO FIGHT MY YETZER WITH A PEA-SHOOTER. Over the next 3 days I cried out to Hashem until I felt that I had nothing left in me. I called my friend and he said that I should try learning Torah 282 (Likutei Moharan). After learning it, the excitement was immense. I couldn't sleep till 3 AM, I had never felt so high or positive in my life. At that point, I started to see incredible help from above. I felt that I could beat it hands down. When I was working on the computer and the pre-urge came about, I would leave the computer

and do Hitbodedut or make myself coffee. When I came back to the computer, the urge was gone B"H.

I have since been trying to keep my eyes and thoughts clean (not easy), and as both my wife and I become more connected to our Neshamos, we have decided only to be intimate on Shabbat. It's not easy, but B"H it has been already a year now.

Somehow though, I knew that the struggle would continue. I have been abroad lately for over 3 weeks on matters of Parnasah. Hashem has taken all parnasah from me and I am unfortunately returning home with nothing for my family. At one point I discovered a certain fashion publication (underwear) at the home of my hosts, and due to my Ye'ush (hopelessness and despair) I found myself ready to go! I even started touching myself, when I realized what I was doing! I would be cheating on my wife (it doesn't matter that most people don't see self-pleasuring as cheating, IT IS), and I would be cheating on Hashem, destroying a year's worth of hard work for a second hand pleasure that would bring to more Ye'ush the moment I cleaned up. I don't know what miracle saved me, but I have since not allowed myself to be alone until I return home tomorrow.

From my humble experience, as a BENONI, we have not yet destroyed this urge. It is only in check, and the more Torah you learn and the more you keep away from it, the easier it becomes. But the best medicine is LE'HIYOT BE'SIMCHA TAMID (to always remain happy) and connected to Hashem Yitbarach. And if you are, the Yetzer Hara can't even get within your Dalet Amot (4 cubits).

Be sure about one thing. Hashem always loves you and his people are always around, just open your **real** eyes and you'll be OK.

Behatzlacha

From Chizuk e-mail 386:

If we listen to Rebbe Nachman and live only **this moment** to its fullest, then a week or a month or even a year are all the same, because you are only living one day and dealing with its challenges. Tomorrow doesn't exist. As soon as you think "I am not certain I can last that long", that is SITRA ACHRA!!!

Rabbi Nachman says that in order for a person to connect to Hashem on any level, this person must have Emunah, one must "believe" in Hashem. And R' Nachman explains that the #1 wall that prevents one from having Emunah in Hashem is....SHEKER (Falsehood). If one has a need to live a life of lies, then this is proof that they are NOT relying on Hashem. They are not trusting in Hashem.... (and that is why they need to use lies).

So, the very first step in getting to Hashem (which is what we absolutely must do in order to heal ourselves from this sickness), is to work on the middah of EMES (Truthfulness).

So, the list you wrote above of lies, cover ups, hiding etc... we have all been there, and we know personally how terrible and shallow it has made us feel. Why? Because we were as far as we could be from our Father in Heaven..... and all because of the **Sheker**.

So, when we miss out on the middah of Emes, we totally miss out on our keshet with Hashem.

From Chizuk e-mail 534:

Rabbi Nachman of Breslav writes (Sefer Ohr Letziyon):

Everyone must say the world was created for me (Sanhedrin 37). This shows that humility isn't that one should feel lowly and worthless, rather humility is knowing that all your attributes and accomplishments are a gift from Hashem.

There's a contradiction, it says, "and he was haughty in the way of Hashem" and another posuk says, "Hashem despises everyone who is haughty". One answer is, that one has to be humble regarding his past deeds, and regarding the future one has to be arrogant thinking that he can accomplish much - and use his strengths to serve Hashem. Unfortunately many people do the opposite, and they are arrogant regarding their past and humble about their future.

Sifting Through the Ruins By "Chl"

I recently read a story about Rav Nosson, the Talmid of Rebbe Nachman. He was walking together with his students after a raging fire ravaged the town of Breslav. They passed by completely burned down houses, and in one of the houses, R' Nosson saw the owner of the house sifting through the ruins, trying to find or rescue some of his belongings. The fact that everything was burnt down didn't stop the owner from looking. R' Nosson turned to his students and said: "This is how we have to pick ourselves up after a fall" (looking for any good points that are still left).

I was walking home, somehow thinking about this story, and I lifted my eyes to the night sky and I said: "G-d, I don't see any good in me, zero. Don't tell me I'm a holy Jew, etc... I'm not gonna buy it right now. I fail everything I try. I want to love you, yet I am so far from Mitzvos, Torah, Midos - you name it, I don't have it.

I looked again into the sky, and then one thing came into my mind: "Maybe I helped someone on [this forum](#)". And I said to G-d: "Thank you HaShem, that is true. Maybe I helped somebody. Maybe that is the essence of being a Jew. I actually might have done something good that justifies my existence and that justifies that You created me and keep me alive".

To all my brothers and sisters out there: The addiction sometimes makes us feel worthless and far from G-d, especially when we feel weak and vulnerable. But if we join together as a community and give each other strength; NOTHING - not even falls - can take away the precious chizuk that we offer one another. This is indeed something that will survive the raging fires of today's world.

A man once came to Reb Nachman of Breslav and told him that he doesn't hold by doing teshuvah because he knows that he'll just go back to doing the same things again. Reb Nachman answered him that Teshuvah is not about *not doing the same sins again*, but rather it's all about bringing Hashem down into the world and into our hearts. Every soul is a peice of Hashem and is connected to Him, but our sins make a blockage between the light of Hashem and us. When we say Viddui and confess our sins, it helps us remove the heavy "shell" that our sins have caused, and this allows the light of Hashem to flow down into the world and into us. Teshuvah is not about beating ourselves up over our past, but rather about LIVING for Hashem's honor **in the present**. The more we seek to bring Hashem's honor and glory down to the world, the more Teshuvah we do! Automatically, all the past sins are forgiven, and **automatically**, we won't end up repeating our past mistakes.

"TaharasHakodesh" sent us an e-mail:

Hi. I have a mainstream yeshiva background and have been in kollel for a few years. I can give shiurim on Reb Nachman's seforim or the sefer taharos hakodesh to your members, if you think that would help.

I have, B"H, with your help, been clean now for a few weeks. I had the most beautiful davening in Uman where I davened for everyone at GYE. I finally felt I could mean when I said, "this year will be different" and I want a life of ruchniyos and not lust. Hopefully this year will be the first that I stay clean past Hoshana Rabba.

From chizuk e-mail #613:

Rebbe Nachman says, that these desires are the greatest test that a man faces in this world (Rabbi Nachman's Wisdom 115). He said that he was able to overcome this desire, but he had to cry out to Hashem again and again. The Satan wanted so much for him to slip on this desire that he was willing to let Rebbe Nachman overcome every other desire, if only he would slip up on this once. Rebbe Nachman did the opposite though, and said he would *ignore* his other desires and not work to control them at all, but the sexual desire he would completely eradicate (Shevachay Haran 16). As a young man, even amidst the fire burning inside him, he overcame this desire completely. He later said, "*I do not have any feeling of desire at all. Men and women are all the same to me*". When he came in contact with a woman, he didn't even have an extraneous thought. (ibid)

Our sages called **Shmiras Habris** "*Yesod*", meaning "Foundation". The foundation of a building is "underground" and no one sees it, yet it holds up the entire building! Shmiras Habris is the hidden part of a Jew, it's **the real you**. If the foundation of a Jew is weak, his whole spiritual structure is fragile and in grave danger of collapse. And if the "foundation" is strong, one can build sky-scrapers of holiness on top of it!

From Chizuk e-mail 619:

A member who calls himself "Levite" joined us a few days ago on the forum. He is 25 years old, happily married with children and living in Bne-Braq. He was raised in Manchester and has been struggling with lust since the age of 13. He is now a full week clean and I would like to share a few inspiring posts of his, many of them laced with wisdom from Rebbe Nachman.

- Last Motzai Shabbos I read thirstily through the handbooks in one sitting, and they gave me the push to start the journey. So here I am posting on my 5th day! It's just great. Life is so wonderful when lust is out! The world looks and feels and seems like a different and happier world!
- Rabbi Nachman said: "*yesh inyan shehakol mishapech letovah*" which literally means that there is a way - or maybe even a place in the heavenly spheres - that everything we ever did is for the best! It's a very deep thought which keeps me going... Maybe there is rhyme and reason for our addicted minds?!
- There is something I remember from Reb Nachman's works. He relates that when he wanted to break the desire of "*niuf*" (lust) the Yetzer Hara told him, I'll give in to any other fight in your life, just let me win this one battle. And Reb Nachman answered, I'LL GIVE IN TO ANYTHING THAT YOU WANT, BUT THERE IS NO WAY I'M GIVING IN TO THIS BATTLE!"

- The Zohar asks, who is the winner in the battle with the Yetzer Hara? The one who has the ammunition in his hand. Asks Reb Nosson of Breslov, this seems strange. How do we know who has won in a *real-life* war? The side that comes home from battle and puts *away* their ammo! So why does the Zohar say that in the war with Yetzer Hara, the one *holding* the ammo in his hand is the winner? Explains Reb Nosson that in this war with the Yetzer Hara, you want to know who has won the war? The one who is still ready to fight again and go into the battlefield even when all seems lost. The one who says, "I don't care, I'm ready to fight again and again". *HE'S* the one who will win. And not only will he win, but the Zohar says **he has ALREADY WON!**

From chizuk e-mail 620:

Story of the Day

No Matter How Many Times You Fall, Try Again

"Levite" who joined us a few days ago on the forum. Today he posted his story in more detail, and I'd like to share some excerpts with you.

... I got older and managed to find easy access to the net for my fix... This carried on until I was 18. I was hardly keeping anything at that point. I was in Israel, clubbing every night and still using p**n as my crutch and getting into deep trouble. I didn't actually do anything, but I saw rock-bottom before I hit it and I knew that I was screwing up my life.

Around that time, I met this wonderful guy that introduced me to the works of the great Chassidic master, my holy Rebbe, Reb Nachman of Breslov Zatzal, and I made a U-turn. Honestly, a U-turn isn't enough to describe what I did. It was more an O-turn. From the lowest place on earth, I came up to place that I only dream of today. I divined hours, learned Torah and Chassidus, and just felt so close to Hashem. I didn't fall for over 4 months at that time. I couldn't. I was getting my "fix" through dveykus to the holiest ideas. But I knew at the time that this feeling wouldn't last forever so I made a decision then, that no matter what, I'd always try again. This way, I could take my "peak" with me for life, so that whatever happened in the future - even if I did fall, I'd pick myself up again.

I fell on Sukkos 4 months later. I felt so bad, but thank G-d, I got back up straight afterwards. But from then on it went down, it became so hard. I was grasping at my new-found position in yiddishkeit, but with my last strengths. Two months later, I fell again and I called my mentor. Although I was very close to him, I had never divulged my personal details until that point, but then I told him what happened and I cried like I never did - before or after - in my life. He told me that Hashem sees my broken heart - "***ki chol levovois doresh Hashem - for Hashem explores all hearts***", and he told me to keep strong and pray right then, because when a person is at his lowest, Hashem is nearest. "***Lev nishbor venidkeh eloikim loi tivzeh - a broken and suppressed heart G-d does not forsake***".

I know this sounds crazy, but within a week I was engaged to be married to my wife - a top shidduch! To this day I can't believe it. Five months before my shidduch I was a guy in the lowest depths, and now such a shidduch!

I had a couple of falls later, but I kept myself up. I think that the biggest lesson that I got out of Reb Nachman's works is that **no matter how many times you fall, try and try - and try again**.

I got married and that's when the problems started again. I was very happy B"H, but once I had to

be with my wife... as Chazal say, **"there is a small limb in a man, if one feeds it, it is hungry, if one starves it, it is satiated"**... I felt like I couldn't keep myself back and I started to fall again quite often. It broke me, and slowly it broke off bits of my warmth in yiddishkeit as well. I fell again and again and again, and no matter what I did or tried, I just went down!

I tried so many ways to stop, but having never looked at it as an addiction I kept falling through and being triggered by the smallest things. It broke me so much, **"why cant I break free?!"**. Whenever I had five minutes of access to the net, I was on p**n. So I stopped using the net, but I still found it on my phone, so I stopped using my phone too. Then I found an internet shop for any excuse, and I was again on the p**n. I decided to have a PC at home that I could use for healthy purposes and there I could install a filter that worked (well, kind of), but Hashem decided that for the business I was in, I needed a phone with internet.

So I continued falling, until one day while surfing online at onlYSimchos.com (and looking where I shouldn't) I came across an ad for this site. **And as soon as I came here, I knew I'd arrived!**

From Chizuk e-mail 621:

Someone posted on the forum:

I had a hard night last night so I said the tefilah of **'hareini moiser atzmi - I hereby give myself entirely over to you, G-d'**. It's an idea that Reb Nachman suggests (see below). It's basically the same idea as they discuss in the 12 steps. I'm feeling better this morning! Hey, Rome wasn't built in one day... but I've got a feeling that Yerushalayim will be!

Sichos Hara"n: 2 (a translation):

"It is a very good idea for a person to throw himself into G-d's hands and to rely on Him. As soon as the day starts, I give over all the happenings of myself - and the people that are relying on me, to G-d, to do as His will sees fit.

And this is very good, for then one does not have to worry or question if he did right or not, for he is relying not on his judgement, but on G-d's impeccable judgement, and if G-d would want him to do different than what he is doing, he is ready to change according to the will of Hashem. And the same before Shabbos or Yom Tov, I give over all the happenings and all my doings of that Shabbos or Yom Tov to Hashem so that it should all be according to His will. And then, regardless of how he was on that Shabbos or Yom Tov, after he surrendered it all and relied on Hashem, he need not need worry at all about whether he succeeded entirely correctly in his upkeeping of these holy days"...

Reb Nachman says that any person who understands the intrinsic holiness and spirituality of a Jew, knows that "sin" has no relationship with a Jew at all; just the opposite; **a Jew can't naturally reside in sin!**

Reb Nachman of Breslov brings this idea as well and says: **don't challenge your Yetzer Hara or your bad thoughts**. Just leave them - and think or **do** something else.

Testimonial of the Day

By "Pesach"

It means so much to me to be part of the GYE community; I think I am bringing much joy and inspiration to my daily SA meeting because of how good I feel inside to be sharing my journey of recovery with such holy and special Jews. Even as I write this, I thank Hashem for such a wonderful gift.

My journey in recovery so far has not been easy, I have had many slips and much frustration, resentment and fear, but even the worst moments in my recovery are better than my best days before. I am starting to learn the lesson Rabbi Nachman wrote: "If I make Hell my bed, You are there". One of my greatest fears is abandonment, I've felt abandoned and alone a lot in both my addiction and recovery, this fear has convinced me of many ludicrous beliefs, such as: that since I slip in my program it means I do not want recovery, that my sponsors and group will run out of patience with me, that Hashem abandoned me to my addiction and he abandons me when I slip. What I realize now is this fear is only in my head, and these beliefs are not true.

The GYE community has inspired me by demonstrating endless patience and tolerance with those who are struggling in their addiction and recovery. Never have I read an unnecessary harsh word, self-righteousness or judgmental comment, all I have seen is brotherhood, love, support, gentleness, respect, Emunah and inspiration. I know that even if God forbid I make Hell my bed again, both the GYE community and Hashem will be there to lend me a hand. What a blessing.

1. Reb Nachman writes in the hakdamah to his Tikkun Haklali, that the **first** thing one should do after this p'gam, if he can, is go to mikveh.

2. Reb Nosson writes, "*im yesh mikveh yesh tikvah* - as long as one goes to mikvah there is hope".

From Chizuk e-mail 840:

Taking Shmiras Ainayim Seriously

From an article on Matzav.com



The pre-*Rosh Hashanah* wave of visitors to the town of Uman in Ukraine peaked on Monday as around 9,000 boarded 50 flights from Ben-Gurion International Airport. Another 5,500 people will travel to Ukraine today on 28 flights to visit the *kever* of Rav Nachman of Breslov. Overall, some 18,000 Breslover *chassidim* and others will travel to spend *Rosh Hashanah* in Uman.

It is 200 years since the *petirah* of Rav Nachman.

"We smile all the way to Uman," was written in a leaflet distributed in Bnei Brak. It was meant to encourage people to cover their eyes with scarves against "forbidden sights."

"Support for flights without movies" is the name of a small group that several years ago encouraged *frum* travelers not to take regular flights unless they had cardboard that could cover the screens on the airplane seats in front of them.

This year the idea caught on that immodest sights may also be a threat outside the airplane - in the airport terminal, for example. So people are being encouraged to bring scarves along.

"In any cloth shop, ask for a thin lycra cloth 70 cm wide (blue, brown or black) costing about 20 NIS," reads one instruction. "It needs to be about 1.5 meters long ... which is necessary so it will sit well and not flow in the wind."

The leaflet notes that even if people laugh at someone wearing the scarf on his face, those covering their eyes "will be rewarded a thousand fold."

In a telephone interview from Uman, one visitor named Avinoam added: "It may sound ridiculous to you, but it has been more successful than expected. I recommend that you try it."

Here's GYE's suggestion: For difficult places, purchase sun-glasses and cover the inside of the lenses with non-see-through transparent lamination paper. This allows us to see vague outlines, but not things we shouldn't.

Tips & Chizuk from Rebbe Nachman's Sefer Hamidos:

- **Sexual lust can only be kept at bay by avoiding provocative sights and thoughts.**
- **Do not enter into negotiations with your desires, for the elaboration of your thoughts, even directed at annulling the desires, will have the effect of reinforcing the desires, and they can overcome you.**
- **Anyone who refrains from acting upon an opportunity to sin will have a miracle done for him.**
- **One who is *pogem habris* (breaches the Covenant) is as if he transgressed all the commandments.**
- **One who wants to guard his sexual purity should always say the truth, and should also always do kindness for one from whom he does not expect repayment.** *(Note: this sounds exactly like the 12-Step program. Integrity and selflessness are the key!)*
- **Sexual fantasies come as a result of the "Breaking of the Vessel of Kindness", and according to the degree of fallen sparks, so is the degree of the sexual fantasies.** *(Note: I'd like to propose that this means that our desires often stem from the subconscious yearning of our holy souls to be "givers". But since we are in a lowly world, our souls misinterpret the signals and the vessels of kindness are broken and perceived by our minds as lustful thoughts. It therefore follows, that those who have strong desires really have lofty souls. They simply need to work on reconnecting to the true source of their soul's desire for kindness and divine connection).*
- **A repair for spilling seed inappropriately is to make efforts to bring people to repent.** *(Note: Midah Kineged Midah. Also Step 12 of the 12 Steps)*

- **One who guards his sexual purity, even if he does not have ancestral merit, G-d grants him merit.**
- **Through sexual immorality, one loses his sense of shame.**
- **When one commits a sin, he later regrets it due to the divine spark within him. But when one commits a sexual sin he does not regret it, for the spark has already left him.** (Note: Perhaps that is why the Zohar says that Teshuvah is impossible for the sin of spilling seed in vain. Not because Hashem won't accept it, but rather because it is so hard to do!)
- **Through discord (Machlokes), one falls into sexual lust.** (Note: Think R.I.D = Restlessness, Irritability & Discontent).
- **Through favors one does for others, sexual lust is annulled, and so the opposite.** (Note: Perhaps that is why the 12-Steps emphasize so much the idea of becoming less selfish and more of a "giver").
- **Guarding sexual purity is the source of blessing.**
- **One who shuts his eyes to avoid seeing evil is saved from humiliations.**
- **One who does not look upon women, merits that his descendants will compile commentaries on the Torah.**

For a little pleasure lasting a mere quarter of an hour, a person can lose this world and the next. (Likkute Moharan II, 208)

~~~~~

Depression and anxiety are the main cause of sexual immorality. The foundation of the Covenant lies in joy. (LIKKUTE ETZOT)

~~~~~

Pride and sexual immorality are bound up with one another. By guarding the Covenant in purity a person can rid himself of pride and find the light that will guide him on the path back to G-d . (LIKUTE ETZOT)

~~~~~

The spiritual powers of the mind and the soul are the shield against sexual desire. Each of the three main facets of the mind is a separate barrier against this impulse. The power of the sexual impulse derives from the "spirit of folly" which overwhelms one with lustful thoughts and fantasies. As soon as a person feels himself threatened by them he should remind himself of the intrinsic superiority of the spiritual realm. He should immediately turn aside from the "spirit of folly" and take refuge in the powers of his soul, setting up the barriers of wisdom and intelligence to protect him against this desire. They are the best shield of all. Understand this well. It is something which cannot really be explained. Each individual will see for himself how to escape the "spirit of folly" and draw closer to his spiritual powers, which are the shield against it.

~~~~~

Every Jew has within him a spark of Mashiach. How much it shows through depends on the purity and holiness he attains. He must be very careful not to weaken this spark in any way. The main thing is to guard against the sexual desire, because even the slightest trace of it can seriously affect this spark. The spirit of Mashiach is a jealous one. The full force of its zeal is turned against every place where there is even the slightest trace of sexual immorality. The holiness and purity of everything associated with Mashiach is so great that even a mere hint of sexual immorality cannot be tolerated. The full force of its jealousy is directed against it.

From Chizuk e-mail #922:

Rebbe Nachman teaches us to be 'baki b'ratzo' and 'baki b'shov' - to be experts at moving forward and experts at falling.

When we fall, we need to know that Hashem is right there with us, next to us and by our sides. He still loves us and treasures us and is there for us. There's no despair.

And when things go well and we're moving higher, we need to know that we have to keep on striving for Hashem. He's so great that we can never 'arrive'. Maybe we haven't even started yet.

The problem is that we do the opposite. When we're down, we get resentful and depressed that things aren't going our way. And as soon as we have a little bit of success, we have a few pennies in the bank, we feel like we're okay and we forget about Hashem. We get proud.

The goal is to strive to be close to Hashem whether we're up or down.

I think these ideas are very important for us in our struggle here. When we're down, we need to have the gaavah to know that Hashem is still with us. He still loves us and is there for us. He never tells us that we're beyond hope. Despite whatever we've done, we need to turn to Him and carry on doing what we can to serve Him.

And when things are going well, we need to have humility. To recognize that wherever we've got to is a gift, and to remember how dependent we still are on Hashem's grace, love and help. And we need to keep striving to foster an ever closer and closer relationship with Him, because "Le'gdulaso Ain Cheker - To His greatness there is no calculation".

From Chizuk e-mail #935:

One of my favorite Torahs is a Breslover Torah. Rebbe Nachman says that often, only AFTER we go through a period of time or a situation, do we first see in 'hindsight' and 'retrospect' how all was really for the good. We see how G-d's hand was guiding us. This is what Hashem showed to Moshe when He showed him the tefilin knot on the back of the head... i.e. the 'hindsight' view, UP FRONT. In other words, Hashem gave Moshe the ability to see 'li'mafreya', lichatchila, before having to 'go through' a situation.

I've felt this way 1000's of times over the last 6 years (I'm sober since Aug '04). For example, now, I could look at 'stuff' on the internet... But later I'll be home with a family, with myself and with G-d... Will I be able to look my family in the eye and connect to them for real? Will I have something to feel guilty about with my closest loved ones? I BH(!) already see myself two hours from now happy with them, which helps prevent me ruining that happiness in this moment, now. Do I want to feel like garbage then?!

On the train to and from work, is the same. I tell myself that at some point I'm going to get off the train. What will be my memory 'looking back' at my behavior when I was on the train? By seeing

myself guilt free and happily exiting the train, it helps me connect to Hashem while I am actually on the train, instead of G-d forbid(!) the opposite.

The Ups & Downs

In Likutei Moharan II:48, Rebbe Nachman writes that every movement that brings a person out of physicality and closer to God is "very precious." If a person progresses even a minute amount, in the higher world he has traversed huge distances.

Since a person's spiritual level is not static, in addition to being able to elevate ourselves, we are in danger of falling. It's important to learn to deal with that possibility and to do everything in our power to assure that if we do fall, we will not exceed the minimal boundaries set by the Torah. At the same time, when we fall, we must never lose hope of elevating ourselves to higher levels, and even surpassing our previous levels. **Very often, a decline is preparation for a significant ascent**, as Rebbe Nachman and Reb Nosson often remind us in their writings.

If a person failed to break his fall in time and has transgressed clear prohibitions, he must be prepared to deal even with this. In Likutei Moharan II:12, Rebbe Nachman tells us that when one is in the lowest of depths, stuck in the mire, he has a special opportunity to find the highest levels of holiness which are hidden there - but only if he is firmly resolved to search for God.

Not only is despair pointless, it can also lead to falling to further depths. But how can anyone escape despair when he understands the seriousness of these moral transgressions? How can a person not despair when the Zohar (219b) states that repentance does not help when it comes to the sin of Er and Onan?

Rebbe Nachman states (Sichot Haran 71) that the Zohar should not be understood literally. **Repentance always helps**, and the main thing is not to repeat one's wrong doing.
