

Welcome, New Members!

Posted by skeptical - 18 Sep 2013 06:30

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There are a lot of new guys who have taken advantage of Ellul-Tishrei to sign up here and work on really living life.

A lot of them don't know where to begin. The ones who have started their journey being clean, can't help but wonder how long it will last.

First of all, I would like to extend a hearty welcome. Make yourselves comfortable and tell us about yourselves.

I would like this thread to be an information booth of sorts, a first stop for people who are trying to figure out where to start.

Please do not get into discussions on this thread. If there is something that works for you, post it here. If there is something on the forum that helped you, quote it here. If you have questions about something posted here, please quote and ask about it elsewhere. I would like this thread to be clear so that people don't need to go digging for it.

Hatzlacha!

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Re: Welcome, New Members!

Posted by skeptical - 18 Sep 2013 06:31

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**Eye.nonymous**

This used to be the standard GYE welcome message. I'm not sure if it's still up to date with all the links, but definitely worth a read:

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Welcome to our community! Once you've arrived, there's no turning back. Everyone here will just grab a hold of you and pull you up, up, up!

Scientific studies have shown that it takes 90 days to change a neural thought pattern that was ingrained in the brain through addictive behaviors. Did you join the [90 day chart](#) on-line? Sign up [over here](#).

Make sure to install a strong filter. It will be almost impossible to break free of this while having all the garbage within a mouse click away. See [this page](#) for one good filter option, along with instructions on how to install it best – and give away the password to our "filter Gabai"... See [this page](#) for another 20 (or so) filter ideas and information...

We get cries for help every day, by e-mail and on the forum. Tzuras Rabim Chatzi Nechama And that is why we created the GYE handbooks (links below). If you read them well, from beginning to end, slowly, and try to implement what you read, you will find the answers within them to enable you to completely turn your life around. You're worth it.

Also, join the [daily Chizuk e-mail lists](#) to get fresh chizuk every day, and post away on this forum. You will get tons of daily Chizuk and support. This disease can't be beat alone. It works best when you get out of isolation!

GuardYourEyes also offers various free anonymous phone conferences, where you can join a group of other frum Yidden, along with an experienced sponsor. See [this page](#) for four different options. Our conferences are taking place daily, throughout the week... This would be a tremendous step in the right direction for you and help you learn freedom from this addiction. Not only will you learn the secret of the 12-Steps – which is known to be the world's most powerful program for beating addiction having helped millions world wide, but joining the group will be another way of GETTING OUT OF ISOLATION and connecting with others who are going through what you are.

Let me tell you a little about the two GuardYourEyes handbooks. They lay down the cornerstone and foundation of our work, and they make our network much more effective and helpful for people.

You see, until now, people would often get "lost" when coming to our website, not knowing what tips and techniques to try. For example, a beginner wouldn't jump straight into therapy or 12-Step groups, while on the other hand, someone whose addiction was more advanced wouldn't be helped by the standard tips of "making fences" putting in "filters" etc... So it was essential to develop a handbook which details all the techniques and tools to dealing with this addiction in progressive order. Now with these handbooks, anyone can read through and see what steps they've tried already, and if those steps haven't worked, they can continue on through the handbook where the steps become progressively more powerful and "addiction-oriented".

And the second handbook, called the "Attitude" handbook, can also help anyone, no matter what level of addiction they may have. Often people write in to us saying that had they only known the proper outlook & attitude that we try and share on the GuardYourEyes network when they were younger, they would have never fallen into an addiction in the first place! So we hope that through this handbook, many addictions will be prevented.

The handbooks are PDF files, set up as eBooks, and they have bookmarks and hyper-links in the Index, to make them easy to navigate.

Note: You might want to print them out to read away from the computer. Keep in mind though, that if you do this, you won't be able to click on the many web links in the articles. But you can always come back to them later. The truth is, it's anyway good to go through the whole handbook once without clicking on links, just to get an overview of all the tools available. Once you did that, you can start again from tool #1 and read each tool through more carefully, click the links and study each technique and assess whether you have tried it fully yet or not...

Right click on the links below and select "Save Link/Target As" to download the handbooks to your computer.

1) [The GuardYourEyes Handbook](#)

This Handbook details 18 suggested tools and techniques, in progressive order, beginning with the most basic and fundamental approaches to dealing with this addiction, and continuing down through increasingly earnest and powerful methods. For the first time, we can gauge our level of addiction and find the appropriate tools for our particular situation. And no matter what level our addiction may have advanced to, we will be able to find the right tools to break free in this handbook!

2) [The GuardYourEyes Attitude](#)

The Attitude Handbook details 30 basic principles to help us maintain the proper attitude and perspective on this struggle. Here are some examples: Understanding what we are up against, what it is that Hashem wants from us, how we can use this struggle for tremendous growth, how we can deal with bad thoughts, discovering how to redirect the power of our souls, understanding that every little bit counts, learning how to bounce back up after a fall, and so on and so forth...

May Hashem be with you!

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Good luck, and welcome to recovery,

Elyah

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Re: Welcome, New Members!  
Posted by skeptical - 18 Sep 2013 06:41

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[Gibbor120](#)

B"H I have been sober for over 3 years now (1235 days).

I do feel some achrayus to share what I have done. I have gained a great deal from being here and perhaps someone else can gain from my experiences.

I was actually sober for about 2 years before finding GYE, but I would characterize those years as "the dry drunk years". Yes, I was sober, but that was mainly due to my wife finding out about my addiction (sobriety through fear). It was only after coming to GYE and learning a few things, and meeting a few people that my attitude changed my sobriety came much more easily to me. That is not to say that I don't have difficult times any more, just that they are fewer and further between, and generally less intense.

I should mention that once my wife found out, we spoke with our rav, both individually and together. It was a big help to both me and my wife. She had no understanding whatsoever how a frum person could do what I was doing. My rav helped a great deal to restore shalom.

Reading the handbook, and sharing it with my wife finally enabled us to talk more openly and honestly. My wife began to understand me (although I'm pretty sure she can never fully understand me). I began to open up to her more than ever before. (this part is tricky, and I still struggle with when and how much to share).

The first BIG thing that I learned from GYE is that I have an allergy to lust. The word lust is very important. I had always viewed my problem in frum terms. I was doing aveiros chamuros. My entire focus was to stop doing aveiros. Now, my wife for example is mutar to me, so I figured fantasizing about her was mutar. My entire avodah was in the realm of issur v'heter. Once I realized that I had an allergy to lust, I knew that lusting over my wife was the same drug as lusting over anyone else. I had to let go of lust in all it's forms mutar or assur is totally irrelevant - both forms are toxic for me.

I learned that my real problem was not an over-active yetzer hora. I have quite a bit of self-control, but in this area, I couldn't control myself no matter how hard I tried. My results varied, but they never lasted, and my struggle only intensified. I realized that acting out was not the problem, but rather the solution (a very bad one indeed) to my other problems. My real problem was dealing with life. Acting out was just a syptom of that problem. It was my escape route.

I learned [from dov](#) that struggling with the problem was just a way of holding on to it. I needed to "let go" of the problem.

I can't remember who pointed me to [Dr. Sorotzkin's website](#), but that made a big impact on me as well. His articles and audio about perfectionism and sexually acting out in particular, were a big help to me. They are all on his website at [drsorotzkin.com/](#). His descriptions of perfectionism and acting out fit me "perfectly" (pardon the pun).

Sharing my problems with other addicts that I met on this forum helped as well. For the first time in my life, I could share my deepest secrets, which I found to be very therapudic. I was not alone in this struggle.

I met dov and [I joined his phone call](#). Sharing my feelings, was new to me. I had always kept things bottled up, trying to portray an image of perfection. Letting go and admitting my shameful deeds, paridoxically, helped me to let go of the shame and come to acceptance. That is not to say that what I did was ok, but that I could live with myself and move on. I could accept that Hashem loves me unconditionally, and that he is here for me. I don't have to "pretend" to be perfect. Hashem loves me with all my imperfections, many of them were given to me and were not a result of my bechira at all. I am not saying that I don't have an achrayus to fix them. Only that I don't have to feel ashamed that I have them. I only have to feel ashamed if I don't care enough to do something about them. (incidentally, this is one of the messages that my rav conveyed to me and my wife.)

I'm sure there is more for me to share, but this is what comes to mind at the moment.

I just want to make a final point about this forum. I was a great outlet for me, but it seems to me that most of the people who are in real recovery "graduate" from this forum at some point. It is a springboard to learning new ideas, and new attitudes. It is a way to meet people who we can share our struggles with, but ultimately, it is the real relationships that make a difference. Posting here can be (and is in many cases) an escape from real life as well.

I do beleive in levels of addiction (although I know dov does not - you are either pregnant or you are not). Different people need different things, but if you are constantly struggling despite

posting on this forum often, perhaps you need something more, something real. I don't believe people recover from being on this forum. I do believe it can be a springboard to recovery.

I wish us all hatzlacha each and every day one day at a time.

Love,

Gibbor

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Re: Welcome, New Members!  
Posted by skeptical - 18 Sep 2013 07:01

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[inastruggle](#)

As I've posted elsewhere, I'm going to be leaving for a while so before I go I'd like to post the full mehalech that I've come up with and that's been helping me stay clean for over 100 days bli ayin harah including around 60 days with access to unfiltered internet.

Most if not all of this, are not my chiddushim, all I did was take ideas that I've seen around the site and chose what worked for me.

One more thing, this whole mehalech is for non-addicts (which I believe myself to be) and if you are addicted then this is probably not the right thing because it's only designed to stop the acting out not to deal with the underlying problem(s) that is causing the addiction.

The Mehalech has two parts.

**Part one**

## What?

Commitment

## Why?

Without commitment then there are two problems.

1)that you don't have a clear picture of the battle

2)When it gets tough, which it almost inevitably will, then without a commitment there's no reason not to fall.

## How?

Take a piece of paper and write down the benefits that you get out of p\*\*\* and m\*\*\*\*\*, such as it makes me feel good, it provides an escape, it relieves my sexual desires, it's an exciting activity to do when i'm bored, etc.

Then write down the reasons that you want to stop, such as it makes me feel disconnected from reality, Hashem, and real women, it makes me feel like a hypocrite, it's a serious aveirah, it makes me waste a ton of time, it makes me feel like I can't control myself, etc. (if you need more reasons then take a look at the [90,000 not to act out](#) thread)

Now be honest with yourself and decide whether or not it's worth it for you to stop. If you decide that it would be worth it to stop, then write down the following:

I am making a rational and thought out decision to stop watching fantasizing, watching p\*\*\*, and m\*\*\*\*\*.Even though I will not be able to use this as an escape or for excitement, or to relieve my sexual desires when I desperately feel the need to [fill in the rest of the benefits].The reason I want to stop is because these benefits are not worth the downsides of this habit which are, the serious aveirah that I'm oiver each time I act out and the feelings of hypocrisy and lack of self discipline that I feel [fill in the rest of the reasons to stop] due to this behavior.Therefore I choose to commit myself to the plan in order to help me control myself.

Note: Feel free to use your own language while writing this.



## **Part two**

### **What?**

The plan

### **Why?**

Without a plan then it's almost impossible to stay clean even if you're completely committed.

### **How?**

The plan has three parts

1)Prevention:This includes filters and accountability software, shmiras einayim and machshava, gedarim, tefillah and posting on the forum.

### **Filters and accountability software**

This means that every device with internet capabilities has a filter and if necessary accountability software, and if you can't put a filter on a computer then you don't use it or use it only in a way that you wont fall.If you find a hole then you plug it up either technically (like blocking the site) or with a taphsic or the like.

### **Shmiras einaim**

This is the way easier said than done plain old not looking at, or thinking about women unnecessarily.This is where a large part of the battle starts even if it isn't triggering to see them (which it probably is even if we don't think so).The reason for this (among others) is because if we move up our struggle to shmiras einaim then the struggle for worse than that becomes a lot easier.

### **Gedarim**

This in my opinion is one of the most important parts.What it means is looking at your past falls

and seeing the patterns that led to it. Then making gedarim for yourself so as not to get into the position and patterns that cause you to fall. An example is that I realized that most of my falls happen later at night after going on a "semi-kosher" site. So I made gedarim not to be online past a certain time and not to go onto that site at all. A similar idea would be not to use the internet with a locked door etc.

### **Tefillah**

If we realize that Hashem is in charge then it makes sense to ask him for help in this struggle. This is pretty simple just say a little tefillah (in middle of shemonah esrei if you like) asking Hashem to help you with the struggle.

### **Posting on the forum**

This is the most fun and fulfilling part in my opinion. Just post when you feel weak, when you're bored you can go to the jhf section, and of course give chizzuk and advice to other members. This helps tremendously because if you see (and say) the ideas enough then it becomes extremely real and sensible to do, plus you have the added benefit of having helped people in the struggle.

**2) Stage one:** This is the first moment that you realize that your mind is thinking about the wrong things. Once this happens then realize that this is the best time to win the battle because from here it just gets harder and harder. Some of the tools that I've seen to deal with the first thought before it gets any further are the blow it up method, saying a tefillah to surrender the thought to Hashem, or thinking about a prepared question.

### **The blow it up method**

This is a personal favorite of mine, it's very simple. When you realize that you're thinking about these things then just blow the thought up. And if it happens again, then just blow it up again. I find it pretty fun, to "get revenge" on the thoughts and think of different ways to blow it up each time. [This](#) is where I saw it.

### **Saying a tefillah to surrender the thought to Hashem**

This is a famous one from SA (I think) I'm going to quote alexeliezer: "Guarding my mind from fantasies and mental images was, and continues to be, the greater challenge. This would include the thought that I feel like masturbating or doing even worse. For this, I have found tefilla -- immediate, repetitive, and incessant tefillah, the only hope. I use the following nusach every time a lustful thought or image tries to take a seat in my mind: Ribono Shel Olam, I am

powerless over lust and my life has become unmanageable. Only You can restore me to sanity. I turn my life and my lust over to Your care and ask You to please heal me from this illness of lust. I don't want to lust. I only want You and a relationship with You and your Torah (and appropriate attraction and interaction with my aishes chayil). I surrender my lust to you. Please take my lust". There are many different versions of the tefillah and some people find it helpful to make up their own version.

### **Thinking about something else**

This is some\_guy's idea [here](#) to use his words: I came up with a really good trick. Think of something interesting right now. I really like science, so I think of a theory or paradox. Make sure you really like the subject. If you need help, think about explaining your subject to a child. Once you have decided on a topic you are truly interested in, stop thinking about it. Whenever you see women on the street, or anything like that, the Yetzah Hara will always put ideas and desires into your head. When that happens you need to remember that curious topic you picked earlier. Because you genuinely are interested in this idea, your mind naturally starts pondering it very deeply. This drowns out the Yetzah Hara until the moment has passed. I suggest thinking about your topic for a while to make sure the you have calmed down.

**3)** stage two: this is when the urge has you in its grips and you feel like you're definitely going to fall. What you need here is some time for either you to tell yourself that you don't really want to do this or for someone else to tell you it. The main thing to remember is that it is never too late until you actually fall, and that even if you're at the computer with the address typed in you can still close the window.

The tools from stage one are still what you should be using to deal with this but what we need for this stage is a tangible reason to stop plus a little bit of breathing room to help us think straight. For that the taphsic method is perfect, it gives some time plus you can use that time to get someone (or you) to help you.

### **The Taphsic method**

In my opinion, the real genius of this method is that it gives you time to not fall (by telling you that you can fall later at a lower cost). What would probably be the most effective as the first part of the method (with the big knas) is to come here and speak to someone, or post on the [i'm about to fall](#) thread or of course speak to someone on the phone if you can. You do have to do this right though and make sure that you're going to pay the knas in the event that you fall, but that it will sting enough to make you not want to

I do want to add that this is not meant to be permanent and eventually you shouldn't need the taphsic anymore since your struggle should get a lot easier after a significant amount of time (at least 90 days if not more)

[The 90 day chart](#)

This is a bit of a dangerous one. This is a pretty good deterrent since you don't want to have to restart your count. But some people find that this becomes their focus, and also if you fall than if it means too much to you then it can become very hard to get up afterwards. I think that the key is to just use it as chizzuk that you managed to make it so far and if you fall ch"v then remember that the streak is still with you forever. Another danger is that it can cause you to feel very confident and get lulled into a false sense of security, to this we have to remember to always be on guard even after 1,000 days clean, imho this is what chaza" I mean by "ain apitropus l'arayos (there is no guardian in areas of immorality). That no matter how good we are the danger is still there.

**Posting often**

This is something that helps in a bit of a different way than it was used for prevention. The idea being that if you post chizzuk and help others often then it will be harder for you to fall because "what will everyone I helped think?".

None of these methods are foolproof, but so far this has been working for me. As for posting often, This is my 320th post which will make me a platinum boarder. The only way up now is to become a moderator. Hear that guard?

I used to write that if anyone disagrees then please post, but i soon realized that this is a yiddishe forum, the way to get someone to argue is to say that no one is allowed to disagree....

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Re: Welcome, New Members!

Posted by skeptical - 18 Sep 2013 07:11

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**AlexEliezer**

All right bro, until you develop your own plan you can borrow mine:

1. Aggressive, uncompromising shmiras eynayim in all settings. No females, tznius or otherwise. Not even faces. Not even ugly ones. This includes newspaper ads, etc.
2. Immediate, relentless verbal surrender of any intrusive fantasies or mental images to Hashem.
3. Study the 12 steps and start implementing them. Do something for your sobriety every day.
4. Add a tefillah in every (weekday) Shmona Esrei asking Hashem to help you guard your personal kedusha.
5. Keep busy with constructive things. Boredom is poison. Resentment is also poison. Stress can be poison for some.
6. Talk to real people -- about this and about life. Spend time face to face with friends.
7. Exercise regularly and vigorously.
8. Have a regular bed time and wake-up time. Don't sleep too much Shabbos afternoon.
9. Take it one day at a time. You're never asked to do more.

10. Learn b'chavrusa, preferably first thing in the morning before davening. I guarantee you'll be ready for bed (as in sleep) at bedtime

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Re: Welcome, New Members!  
Posted by skeptical - 18 Sep 2013 07:12

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**AlexEliezer**

My approach was to first get very sober.

With alcohol it's simpler to be sober. You simply don't drink.

With lust addiction, the substance is everywhere, and can be had many ways.

The two basic ways are what we see and what we think (fantasize).

So extreme, aggressive, active shmiras eynayim is critical to cut off the most obvious source of the drug. It also decreases the number of fantasies which are triggered.

This means not looking at women unless absolutely necessary for business. No movies, TV, newspapers, magazines, posters, and of course people on the street. A peace will come over you as soon as you start doing this.

Next is to surrender lustful thoughts to Hashem. I simply daven every time a lustful thought comes, asking Hashem to take my lust.

I continue to work the steps as I have come to understand them, in my own way.

My wife does know about my addiction but she is in no way my sobriety partner. I was sober 3 years before I told her (see my thread in the married section for the complete story)

I have someone I met on GYE that I can call at any time, and we speak around once a month. I have found this very helpful. I also spent many hours on the phone with guys who were

struggling unsuccessfully. (Several have since joined SA groups and are now sober.)

I have made amends with my wife and children for my behavior towards them when I was in active addiction. I make an effort to get together with friends once or twice a month. I learn with a chavrusa every weekday (I was doing this in active addiction also, but it's going much better now). I exercise, try to get enough sleep, don't overindulge in food, listen to mussar mp3's in the car.

In short, I'm

A ) avoiding the drug (sobriety)

B ) living real life (recovery)

Ready?

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Re: Welcome, New Members!  
Posted by skeptical - 18 Sep 2013 07:24

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*The following was originally posted in [my thread](#).*

I have been asked to post the method I use to stay clean. To be honest, when I first started, I didn't really have any method. I just decided to stop and I did. Along the way, I've picked up some gems of wisdom and found myself giving them over to others who have also seen some success using them.

I will attempt to start posting some of those tips here. As we are on a continuing journey, I'm sure I will always be adding things to it.

**#1: A commitment to stop -**

This is the first thing that must be made. Sometimes this comes from inspiration that we see, or something that we feel. I know for me, I started coming to Guard Your Eyes and snooped around without any commitment for a few months. Many times I had the browser open with one tab on GYE and the others on pure shmutz. I was here, but without the commitment, so no change was happening. Then one day, particularly after being steeped in garbage, I decided that I had had enough. I decided to stop.

Many people on here say that they want to stop. The thing is that though they have that feeling, a large part of them doesn't really want to let go of the stuff. It simply feels too good.

We need to make a firm decision. Have we had enough or not? Are we ready to give up the pleasures in order to lead a much happier life?

If the answer to that is yes, we're on our way.

### **#2: Let go of the past, forget the future, live the present -**

Many of us are plagued by thoughts of our pasts. We have failed so many times in the past, why will this time be any different? Is it just a matter of time before I'll fail again? Why bother?

We need to realize that each moment, each choice, and each action is independent of the ones before and after it. We need to let go of the past, it doesn't matter what happened back then (even 5 minutes ago!), and it really doesn't matter if I might fall in the future. We need to live the present and concentrate on making the right decisions when we are faced with them moment by moment.

### **#3: Negative programming, positive programming -**

This is somewhat tied into letting go of the past and the harmful messages we've been telling ourselves.



I heard this concept from an expert salesman. He says that a lot of sales people are so afraid of the word no, they are constantly coming up with excuses to push off their sales calls. In the morning when they get to the office they tell themselves, "It's way too early, I don't want to seem too eager! I'll make the calls later." A couple of hours pass and then the excuse changes to, "They're probably going out to lunch. I'll call afterwards!" After lunch, time has to be given to allow the prospective client to get settled in by their desks. Then when they're finally ready to make the call, they glimpse at the clock and, "Oh well, the day is practically finished. Don't want to call them as they're getting ready to leave the office! I'll call tomorrow!" The excuses and procrastination are made using different words, but the real message going through their mind is, "They'll say no and I'm going to be a failure as a salesperson!"

In order to combat this, he says, a salesman has to literally talk to himself, smile and say things like, "I am great! I can sell anything to anyone!" Over and over again, you say these things and you're recording it into your subconscious to be retrieved later when you need it.

If we are telling ourselves things like, "It's only a matter of time before I fail, I always fail after X amount of days, when I see such and such I have no choice but to fail, etc." we are not failing! We are doing exactly what we said we'd be doing!

We need to change these messages and replace them with positive messages. "With Hashem's help, I will make the right choices as they present themselves to me, moment by moment!"

#### **#4: Be aware of underlying issues -**

The only instance the past is important, is to learn from it. What was going on in the past that made us feel the need to indulge?

For most of us, it's to escape parts of our lives that are too painful to live. Let's face it, doing this stuff makes us feel good, temporarily. It's like taking a Tylenol - temporary pain relief. All it really does is mask over the feelings for a few fleeting moments. As soon as we're done, the pain comes flooding back, only this time with much much more strength, because now we have the added anguish of having allowed ourselves to sink so low.

We all have underlying issues. Usually it comes in the form of stress, whether it be marriage problems, money issues, anxiety over an upcoming event, self-pity, or anything like that. It's important to realize what issues we've been trying to run away from and learn how to deal with them in a healthy way.

Staying clean without working on the underlying issues is like mowing over weeds without pulling out the root. It may look nice to start out, but eventually, they will grow back.

### **#5: Don't actively count the days -**

I'm not really for the 90-Day Challenge for a couple of reasons.

1) It keeps you focused on trying to "make it through" each day when really we should just be living our lives.

2) It could give us the false expectation that as soon as we make it to 90, we are cured. As guys, it is normal to have sexual curiosities and cravings, we will live with that for the rest of our lives. Giving into those cravings in an inappropriate way, at any point in our lives, has the potential to bring us back to square one.

I recommend writing your start date and time somewhere and once in a while, or when someone asks you how far along you are, you can look it up and make the calculations. This could encourage you and the questioner to keep on going and to be thankful to Hashem for giving you the strength to get that far.

### **#6 : Be aware of positive changes -**

After a few days, you are probably noticing some of the positive effects of being clean. Savor the good feelings and remember them. Is your relationship with your wife or other people you deal with on a regular basis improving? With me, my wife began noticing the change in me before I even let her know I was working on myself, and she said so. When the little cravings would try to get at me, I would tell them that I was much happier being clean and promptly dismissed them. On the flip side, I would...

**Remember the negative consequences of giving in -**

Remember how falling would really make you feel after the short-lived high, the impact it would make on your relationships, the way it made you feel like you were living a double life, etc. It's just not worth it.

**#7: If you know Alef, teach Alef -**

The Lubavitcher Rebbe would tell people that nobody knows too little to teach others. If you know Alef, he would say, teach Alef. Reach out to others, if something works for you and it could help others, rather than keeping it to yourself, share it with others who it could help. We are often unaware of the wellsprings we have inside of us. Often when someone asks me about something they're having trouble with, I ask them what they would tell an imaginary friend who just logged on with that exact issue. Usually their advice is really good! When we teach others, we are teaching ourselves. When we help others, we are helping ourselves. Each time we share how we should be looking at a situation, we are reinforcing it in our minds. This is one of the first things I started doing and it has helped me tremendously.

**#8: Everything is hashgacha pratis -**

There are guys I speak to on here who are down because they are single and want so badly to get married.

There are other guys who wish they were still single because they long for the freedom that being single allowed them, or because they wished they could deal with their issues without it affecting their wife.

I've met guys who so badly want kids.

I've met guys who long for the days when they had uninterrupted quiet time with their spouse.

In short, the grass is always greener on the other side.

Things not going the way you had envisioned it?

Smile and relax, it's ok.

Everything that happens in this world is Hashem's doing and everything Hashem does is good. We think we know how things should be. Hashem knows how things should be. We have just one piece of the jigsaw puzzle, Hashem sees the whole picture. Everything is being orchestrated precisely for our own good. If we're in a situation, even if it's a difficult one, we can relax knowing that the sole purpose of the situation we are in is for us to grow.

Be the best you can be in the situation you're in!

### **#9: The only person I can control is myself -**

Sometimes the people around us behave in ways that make us angry or upset. Sometime women on the street aren't dressed properly. We can't control how they behave. We can only control how we react to them. When it comes to people we deal with who get us down (a wife, parents, siblings, for instance), sometimes it just takes some understanding and putting ourselves in their shoes. It won't necessarily change things, but it could help us tolerate the behavior, and respond appropriately. If it's a woman on the street, we have the choice to drink in the sight or to look away. If the situation is one that we are incapable of changing, we can remember what was written above regarding hashgacha pratis and grow from the situation.

### **#10: Ivdu es Hashem b'simcha! -**

It's a very big mitzvah to be happy and to serve Hashem with joy. In fact, it's just impossible to serve Hashem properly when we're down. The yetzer harah (the selfish part of us) is very much aware of this and therefore, it doesn't really care so much if we sin, what it wants is for us to get all sad about it. Why? Because sadness breeds more reason to make ourselves feel better and the YH always has good ideas of how to go about doing that... (What he conveniently lets us forget is how miserable we feel after!)

Feel like acting out? Find something to smile, laugh, be happy about, and give the YH the boot!

## **#11: Did you slip or fall? -**

Just breathe, it's ok. We're working on a middah that in most cases has become an ingrained habit over many years. Though we're trying, it's a bit unrealistic to expect to change things completely overnight, or even in a few weeks or months. The minutes, days, or months are not lost. They are a huge accomplishment that we need to continue to build upon.

Take a moment to reflect. What worked, what didn't work? What can you tweak to do better?

The important thing is to be thankful to Hashem for giving us the strength to achieve what we were able to achieve and ask for more strength to continue. Pick yourself up, wipe off the dust and keep on moving forward. B'ezras Hashem you will grow in ways you never imagined and your life will be the happiest it can be!

## **#12: Asking Hashem to take it away -**

A few days ago, I was having a really tough time controlling my thoughts. Out of desperation, I thought to myself, "There are guys on GYE who say that they just ask Hashem to 'take away the lust,' and they say that it works. Why not give it a shot?"

I didn't verbalize it, there were people around, I just thought it: Hashem, I'm having a difficult time with these thoughts. Please take them away from me.

Poof! They disappeared immediately.

Why does this work?

I think the answer is that when we're asking Hashem to help us through it, we are forcing ourselves to think about Him, even if it's on the most basic level. Intrinsicly we know that these

desires are all about making ourselves feel good, throwing Hashem and all other victims to the sidelines. If I believe in Hashem enough to ask Him to help me through a hard time, I'm putting Him at the center of it all and then there's no room for entertaining such thoughts and desires.

May we all have the strength to keep Hashem at the center of our lives and ask Him for help when we need it.

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Re: Welcome, New Members!  
Posted by skeptical - 18 Sep 2013 07:31

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### **Life is a Game of Super Mario Bros.**

Someone once told me that he sometimes feels like a hypocrite. How can he do some things, or take on new mitzvos when there are others he is not currently doing?

I told him that one mitzvah is not dependent on the other. I told him to look at it like a game of Super Mario Bros. All the coins you collect add to your points, but if you miss one or two or even more, it's ok as long as you keep trying to get as many as you can. Points aren't subtracted because you missed a coin. You can only gain by collecting more.

And that's really how we need to look at our challenge. Every moment we hold back and every mitzvah we do, we're gaining points. If we fall, we "lose a life" and need to start over. Except that with life there's no game over until the Game is really over. We just need to try to beat our previous score.

### **Do we get depressed and give up playing when we lose a life?**

Most people try to learn from that failed turn. They know that a monster showing up is inevitable - it's part of the game - so they try to remember in what circumstance it showed up and they learn from failing what they did wrong so they could try to beat it the next time.

When we start over playing a game like that, we're not thinking about our past failure except to say, "Hey, I got killed because of such and such - Next time let's try this!" We're not intimidated by the big monster at the end of the level. We're thinking how to successfully beat it and are determined to get to the next level.

### **Do we know what will be tomorrow or the next day? Will this attempt be like the others?**

We never know what life will bring and thinking about any point in time beyond the here and now is pointless. Don't think about the monster except to strategize how you're going to beat him when/if he does rear his ugly head.

**Keep positive.** Savour every clean moment whether it's an hour, a day or a month. They're all accomplishments. Remind yourself how happy you are being clean. When you have temptations, tell yourself that it's really not a good "medicine."

Keep collecting those coins and be proud of them!

### **inastruggle**

The way to go through life (or a super mario game...) is like a gps

### **You have to decide on you're destination at the beginning.**

if you don't type a clear destination then you can't even start the journey. If you don't have a goal you're aiming for then you won't get anywhere. before we start recovery we have to sit down and decide to commit to get to the destination:recovery

### **Then you plan the most direct route.**

there isn't a point in detours it will just delay your arrival. we have to choose the right methods to control ourselves and to avoid the fight to begin with, not just what seems easiest

**Even a little bit in the wrong direction brings you to a different place.**

turning just slightly off the path is going to bring you to a different place than you want to be. if we decide that today we'll let ourselves have 'just a little slip' then we're going off the path and it'll make it harder to reach the destination.

**If you make a wrong turn just recalculate and go back on track without stopping to look behind.**

stopping to feel bad for yourself isn't productive it will just make the journey take longer. after a wrong turn we don't stop the car for ten minutes we just go even faster to make up for the lost time. if we fall then we have to start on the right path right away, waiting is just going to make it worse if we fall we have to just KOT.

**You don't look at the whole route just the next turn.**

there isn't a point in knowing whats happening in two turns from now just focus on now and plan ahead for the next challenge. one day at a time (but we do have to plan ahead just a little bit)

**and if you need a good gps check out the ones made by gye**

DUH

**nitzotzeloki**

i was thinking of another way life is like video games. there are certain games like warcraft or command and conquer where there is a mission goal. there are also generally other things aside from the goal that can be done. what generally happens if you try and explore everything is that you dont succeed at the goal.

something that has been useful for me in dealing with my CRAZY thinking and self judgement is picking a goal for myself, (i.e. get through the day at work) when my head starts going all over the place, no matter how much the individual thought makes sense to me at the time, if it's not directed to the goal it's not important.

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Re: Welcome, New Members!

Posted by skeptical - 01 Nov 2013 21:37

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## **Am I An Addict?**

This is a question that many newcomers to this site find themselves grappling with.

First off, I'd like to point out that if the title, 'Addict' makes you uncomfortable, don't use it. If you are an addict, you will eventually figure that out. The bottom line is that you came here because you have an issue that is taking over your life, and you haven't been able to make progress on your own.

Now that that is out of the way, I would like to touch upon what addiction means to me, and how a basic function of human life can turn into such.

Take a piece of cake.

It's a tasty food, but not a very healthy choice for nutritional value.

Now, most people can have a slice or two on occasion, and it will be enough for them.

In the grand of scheme of things, though unhealthy, it won't be very harmful to these people because they are able to stop eating once they've had enough.

For overeaters, however, they have no off switch. They are obsessed with food and they can't get enough of it. Every minute, they are eagerly awaiting their next feast. Before they get to an event, their minds are preoccupied with what might be served.

It's that way for lust addicts as well. For most people, they may be able to have a bit of lust. We can argue about whether it can be healthy or not, but for those people, in the grand scheme of things, it's not a big deal.

For me, I know that once I allow myself to entertain one tiny thought of, "wow, cute looking girl," or whatever, my mind does not let go. There is no off switch. One thought leads to the next, which leads to the next. The next thing I know I'm on the computer saying, "5 more minutes." Three hours later, it's one or two in the morning, I know I have to be up at 6:30, and I'm still having a hard time pulling myself away to go to sleep. Then in addiction mode, I wake up at 5:30 to get on before I need to leave the house. I'm exhausted and not functioning properly, but who cares? I like it. So the whole day I'm looking forward to getting back to my garbage and I'm irritable if I'm unable to return it when I was anticipating it.

This is the picture of addiction, but keep in mind there are many people on GYE who are going through the same struggles. Being an addict doesn't mean that we are bad. It just means that over time we have taught ourselves to deal with life in an unhealthy way. It's a journey to get and keep ourselves healthy, but there are many many success stories.

Whatever you do, don't give up. Stay out of isolation and keep on moving forward!

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Re: Welcome, New Members!  
Posted by skeptical - 08 Nov 2013 03:55

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**airmale613**

Amazing shiur on addiction by Rabbi Wallerstein

[www.torahanytime.com/audio/rabbi-zecharia-wallerstein-rosh-hashanah-pathway-out-of-addiction/](http://www.torahanytime.com/audio/rabbi-zecharia-wallerstein-rosh-hashanah-pathway-out-of-addiction/)

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Re: Welcome, New Members!

Posted by skeptical - 24 Apr 2014 20:16

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**The.Guard**

**Make sure to see the 12 suggestions on the [First Time Here page](#).**

**Also, check out your [Personal Home-page](#). It will guide you through each tool/task that we suggest, one by one, and help you track your progress in recovery.**

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Re: Welcome, New Members!  
Posted by cholent - 30 May 2014 19:35

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thanx so much for all those tips. every time i fall i get chizuck just from reading this, by realizing that theres still hope

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Re: Welcome, New Members!  
Posted by newaction - 07 Sep 2014 22:59

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i wanted to add to this list a topic that i did not come across yet in GYE's topics which is the inyan of Goishe Music. Music produced by Goyim from Rock to puerto rican salsa. All of it even if obscene words are not said ; the music in its essence , in its neshama , carries the neshama and the mind that its author owns. So by being a music fan or follower you get exposed inadvertently in a subtle but sure way to the dirt that dwells in its composer. I am not sure about classical music , but it may as well be the same . So if you are doing many steps to stay sober and its a rocky road , maybe its the music that you are listening to . Its my opinion , being from southn america and love latin beat. i have about six months that stopped listening altogether to my favorite type of music. And i do feel that it adds to my being sober. my opinion , take it or leave it.

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Re: Welcome, New Members!

Posted by skeptical - 10 Dec 2014 05:18

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Very pertinent video on how to view personal challenges/shortcomings.

Are our weaknesses actually our strength?

["And Yaakov Remained Alone": Our Lonely Battles](#)

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Re: Welcome, New Members!

Posted by Shmeichel - 10 Dec 2014 21:11

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newaction, with you on this music thought, all the way

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