

1 step forward, 1 step back

Posted by bahava - 22 Oct 2009 05:26

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howdy gentlemen.

I've been lurking around this site for about a month now (thank you anonymous yid for emailing me!) and i figure its finally time i post a bit about my experiences.

i just made it to level 3 in the 90 day journey. i'm 14 days clean! a record for the past 12 months, yishtabach shemo ;D ;D ;D

my main problems seem to be the r"l standard P and M issues. i'm in my lower 20s, single, in college.

steps i've taken that are working great so far:

1. working through the 2 handbooks
2. stepping out of the room and praying for 10 seconds if inappropriate content appears on my screen, no matter how it got there.
3. daily emails
4. daily 5 minute seder in Esah Einai, a new sefer on shmiras enayim
5. prozac (been on for a year)
6. weekly appointment with therapist, discussing this among other issues
7. keeping the door open when web surfing in room by myself
8. internet filter
9. praying for help with these issues, for myself and klal yisroel
10. helping a friend work out his issues in these areas

11. reading through these forums and seeing holy jews in much worse situations break free!  
what a geshmak to see how much hope there is!

12. keeping track on the 90 day program

13. trying to watch my eyes outside in general

ok. holy cow. thats a long list. this is really my number one priority right now. and its working!!!

here's where i can use some advice:

historically, i'd fall 1-2 times a week. getting to a week clean is a challenge. when i do get there once in a while, i tend to fall on that very day. sometimes i'll tell myself "wow! you've made it a whole week! and you're feeling totally in control!" and shortly after, i'll fall.

last Tishrei, i went a whole month clean (first time in over 5 years!!!!!!!!!!) and fell like on day 31.

i've come up with 2 possible explanations for this pattern of falling after milestones:

1. i feel like i'm in control, so i let down my guard, allowing the yetzer to strike.
2. i feel like i've accomplished something, so i 'reward' myself with pleasure

so how do i combat this pattern?

i've made it 2 weeks now pretty bump-free, yishtabach shemo. probably because of the constant chizuk i'm getting throughout the day (see list above).

here's my fear:

i'll hit 30 days, and fall back. c'v. or maybe even 90, and fall back.

how do i break this pattern? anyone with similar experience?

thank you so much. i love all of you. and i pray that you'll all break free.

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Re: 1 step forward, 1 step back

Posted by bahava - 07 Jan 2010 06:15

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[Kollel Guy wrote on 07 Jan 2010 06:06:](#)

Oh, and according to halacha, you should really go to the mikva the next morning before davening,

You're gonna have to source that, Kollel Guy.

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Re: 1 step forward, 1 step back

Posted by imtrying25 - 07 Jan 2010 10:46

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BH i dont suffer from this. But i do think that as time goes on it will get less and less. It comes from our thoughts during the day, and if we are more careful things will get better!

Keep it up bro. We "love " you!

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Re: 1 step forward, 1 step back

Posted by Dov - 07 Jan 2010 19:13

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[b'ahava wrote on 07 Jan 2010 05:51:](#)

BTW -

What should my policy be regarding wet dreams?

I've been ignoring the issue and hoping it would take care of itself as I was more careful with my eyes and thoughts throughout the day. Not sure there's much else I can do.

Thoughts?

They are not good, to be sure. But we have visited this issue before so do some research on the forum.

In general, it depends. How bad off are you? If your MO includes lots of nutty and dangerous lust acting out or frequent porn and masturbation, and now you are not doing any of those, then it seems to me that you are in very good shape for the time being. If you put a lot of energy into "solving" the mikrei layla problem you'll probably end up throwing away all you have gained thus far because you'll again be focusing on lusting/not lusting all day long. It'll be on your mind even more. In the recovery that I am familiar with, improvement comes along with thinking about lusting (**and not** lusting), **less** - not **more**. So, if recovery is your goal, you may need to go easier on yourself here.

(A sefer I learned in my years of active illness said "es meguroseihem avi lahem" - "I'll bring their fears to come to pass upon them" - and interpreted it to mean that if you go to sleep worried about keri, then you'll probably have it! Nu. Poshut, really.)

On the other hand, if you are an occasional drinker as it is, and your real focus is on taharas hamachshovah because you feel the need to be a person with taharas hamachshova, then you'd better ask a rabbi. I'm just a recovering addict (who is gifted with a good measure of taharas hamachshova in order to stay sober and live). And I'm loving it!

And definitely, if you do the right thing it'll get better, eventually.

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Re: 1 step forward, 1 step back

Posted by silentbattle - 08 Jan 2010 00:19

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KG - it might be nice to go to the mikvah, but i was just told of a letter in which R' Volbe says that if a person is nichshol in mz"l (intentionally), he doesn't have to go - he can, if he wants.

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Re: 1 step forward, 1 step back

Posted by Kollel Guy - 08 Jan 2010 01:05

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Yeah I said "should really" which means black on white he does NOT have to go (O.C. 88 I think, only one sif), but besides for raw halachah - he has every reason to go. Not only by a mikra laila, not only by z"l c"v, but even after marital relations.

Maybe one day when I have time I'll put a thread in the beis medrash with all the mekoros.

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Re: 1 step forward, 1 step back

Posted by Dov - 08 Jan 2010 01:07

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Mikvah, schmikva....really, I'd go to the mikvah too, if it happened to me c"v. It b"H completely stopped happening after being sober about a year. Till then it happened 2-3 times a year (even though I was married and occasionally together with my wife).

**But** if going to the mikvah made me feel in my own heart that my lust addiction was primarily a religious struggle (about olam *habo* and **Hashem**), rather than mainly a struggle for my life now (olam *hazeh*, and **me**), then I'd **avoid** it like the plague. Cuz that was one of the main nekudos that *made me fail* for years and years, before recovery.

Just me sharing.

Good Shabbos!!

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Re: 1 step forward, 1 step back

Posted by imtrying25 - 09 Jan 2010 17:00

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Thanks Reb Dov for those last 2 posts. Really put alot into perspective!!

Shavua Tov B'ahava. Wishing you a great week!!!

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Re: 1 step forward, 1 step back

Posted by silentbattle - 10 Jan 2010 20:27

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Hey, B'ahava, hope you're doing well!

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Re: 1 step forward, 1 step back

Posted by bahava - 12 Jan 2010 04:46

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Hi people.

Umm, I'm not depressed anymore!

I sort of snapped out of it in the shower Erev Shabbat.

After a(nother) fall, I was hit with a wave of perspective about how far I'd come in the past few months.

So I think I'm back. The struggle is something I want now, its something that's fun again.

I see it as a challenge and not just some external force that has ruined me.

(This is the attitude that got me going on my original clean streak, and its taking me out of depression now. I need this, Dov. Maybe in a couple of weeks we can discuss the down sides of this attitude.)

You know, I'd hate to admit it, but I think my downward spiral (which lasted almost 2 months, r"l) was triggered by a girl. It seems I invested emotionally in her WAY too quickly (a handful of hours) and she broke my heart.

Yes, I made a mistake, but cut me some slack. I'm new to the shidduch game.

Anyway, it seems that I'm making the same mistake, and setting myself up for disaster, again as I write this.

There's a new girl.

We're 1 date in. I don't know how she feels about me. And I'm freaking out.

You know, this is really pathetic. This is so childish. Its embarrassing.

But its real. And I can't help myself.

Maybe I'm not ready for this whole dating thing. Maybe I'll take a break after this one.

But I have to get through this one first.

Worst of all, you want to know WHY I'm falling for her? Because I'm reading the Wikipedia page on her grandfather.

This really has to be a new low of emotional immaturity for this site.

L'maiseh, I'm feeling pretty good now.

But I'm setting myself up for disaster, yet again, if/when it doesn't work out.

How do I deal with this? (Telling me to 'just relax' is not doing it.)

Peace!

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Re: 1 step forward, 1 step back

Posted by bahava - 12 Jan 2010 04:47

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I'm going to look back at that last post in like a month and laugh at how stupid I was.

Oy.

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Re: 1 step forward, 1 step back

Posted by Kollel Guy - 12 Jan 2010 04:49

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Alright, good to hear you've figured out what's bothering you. It's always helpful to put those things on the table, regardless of how insignificant they seem.

I'm waiting to see your name on the top of the 90 day chart.

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Re: 1 step forward, 1 step back

Posted by silentbattle - 12 Jan 2010 16:03

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Woohoo! I'm glad to hear that you're back - I like your idea - use whatever you need to get moving again, then once you're up, you can re-examine things. That sounds like a very balanced approach.



I can certainly relate to feeling down after getting dumped, and having that lead to big falls...

When it comes to dating...well, it's hard. How do you balance opening up and connecting, and yet not having that happen too quickly?

I think that at the beginning, focus on getting to know her, and if you need to, hold yourself back a bit. Let the emotional connection develop as time goes on.

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Re: 1 step forward, 1 step back

Posted by Dov - 12 Jan 2010 23:33

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[b'ahava wrote on 12 Jan 2010 04:47:](#)

I'm going to look back at that last post in like a month and laugh at how stupid I was.

Oy.

Why wait a month, b'ahava?

I look at my posts from yesterday and *already* see how stupid I am!

Yes, we have plenty stupidity.

The question you are asking is not how to feel better about what you are doing dating before first knowing some good recovery, but it seems to be about what you should do. Right? You are in a crappy place, knowing what you want to do and knowing what's really best for the girl you are dating - oh, and what's best for you.... Right?

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